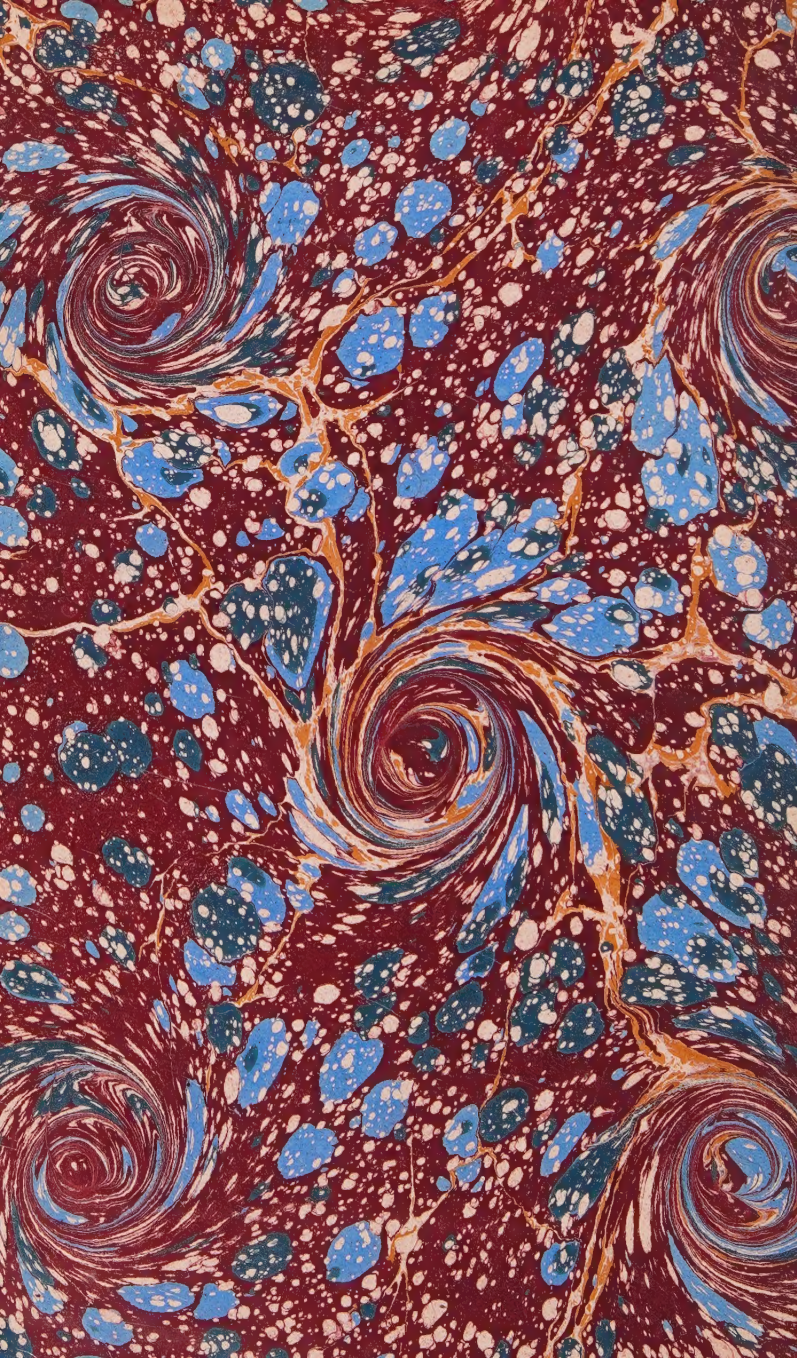

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NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY.

COMPRISING THE PRINCIPAL

POPULAR TRADITIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS

OF

SCANDINAVIA, NORTH GERMANY,

AND

THE NETHERLANDS.

COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL AND OTHER SOURCES,

BY

BENJAMIN THORPE,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AT MUNICH.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

SCANDINAVIAN POPULAR TRADITIONS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

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INTRODUCTION[1].

Amid the lofty *Fjelds*[2] of Norway the gigantic Jutul has fixed his home, of whose fingers and feet traces may be seen in the hard stone, and whom fragments of rock and ponderous grave-stones serve for weapons; in the lower ridges the wily Troll and the beautiful Huldra have their dwelling; in mounds and by lofty trees the countless swarms of Elves have their haunt, while beneath the earth the small but long-armed and skilful dwarfs exercise their handicrafts. In the evening twilight Thusser and Vættir still wander about, and the merry, wanton Nisser frisk and dance by moonlight. In the rivers and lakes lurks the fell Nök, and through the air flies the Aasgaards-reia's frantic crew[3], announcing bloodshed and war, while a guardian, warning Fölgie attends each mortal on his earthly career. Thus speaks tradition, and that this belief is of long standing in the North may be concluded

[1] From Faye's Norske Folke-Sagn. Christiania, 1844.

[2] I have preserved the native orthography of this word (signifying a far outstretched stony mountain), to prevent confusion with the English word *field*. It is our north of England *fell*.

[3] See p. 25.

from the testimony of Procopius :—"The Thulites worship many gods and spirits, in heaven, in air, on earth, in the sea, and some even that are said to inhabit the waters of springs and rivers. They constantly make to them all kinds of offerings [1]."

The question that naturally first presents itself to us, on hearing these wondrous stories, is: What can have given birth to, and indelibly imprinted and quickened in the imagination of the people a superstition, which is the more remarkable, as similar opinions are found among the majority of the people in the north of Europe?

It is probable that unacquaintance with nature and her powers, combined with the innate desire of finding a reason for and explaining the various natural phenomena, that must daily and hourly attract the attention of mankind, has led them to see the causes of these phenomena in the power of the beings who, as they supposed, had produced them, and afterwards frequented and busied themselves with and in their own productions. These phenomena were too numerous and various to allow the ascribing of them to a single being, and therefore a number of supernatural beings were imagined, whose dangerous influence and pernicious wrath it was sought to avert by sacrifices and other means.

The hollow thundering that is at times heard among the mountains, the smoke and fire that ascend from some of them, the destruction often caused by a sudden earth-slip or earthquake, all of which in our times are easily explained from natural causes, might to the rugged peasant, wholly unacquainted with nature and her hidden powers, appear

[1] Geijer, Svea Rikes Häfder, p. 87.

as supernatural, and as the operations of Jutuls, Giants, and similar mighty, evil beings, that were supposed to dwell in the mountains, and of whose huge feet and fingers a lively imagination easily found marks in the hard rocks. Fear and superstition gradually invested these imaginary beings with all sorts of terrific forms [1], and people fancied they saw these direst foes of man transformed into stone all over the country.

Crystals and other natural productions were found, which could not have been made by human hands; a voice, a sound, was sometimes heard where least expected, either an echo, or arising from other natural causes, and which could now be easily accounted for; footsteps of men were seen where no one had ever chanced to meet a human being; among many comely children there was a deformed one, which either by its ugliness or its excessive stupidity was distinguished from the others. All these things, it was said, must have a cause, and from ignorance of nature, joined to superstition and a lively imagination, the idea suggested itself of conjuring up beings, to whom all these phenomena might be ascribed, and who, according to the places of sojourn assigned them, were called Forest-trolls, Huldres, Mountain-trolls, Vættir, Elves, Dwarfs, Nisser, Mares, etc.

The sea's smooth surface, its hidden, unfathomable depth, the raging of the storm, and the foamy billows of the troubled ocean, make a deep and often a wonderful impression on the human mind. This state of feeling,

[1] In Orvarodd's Saga, c. 15, a giant is thus described: He was quite black except his eyes and teeth, which were white; his nose was large and hooked; his hair, which hung down over all his breast, was as coarse as fish's gills, and his eyes were like two pools of water.

together with the extraordinary creatures of the ocean that are sometimes caught, and the terrific marine monsters that are sometimes seen, must supply the ignorant fisherman, in his sequestered home, with such abundant food for his invention or fancy, that it is almost a wonder there are not even more stories of mermen, mermaids, and other creations of the deep.

The monotonous roar of the waterfalls, the squalls and whirlpools that render our fiords and rivers so dangerous, and in which many persons annually perish, together with the circumstance, that in several fresh waters, when a thaw is at hand, the ice splits through the middle with a fearful crash, leaving an open strip, have given occasion to superstition to imagine the depths of the water inhabited by malignant sprites, that yearly at least require a human being for a sacrifice, and which, under the names of Nöks, Grims and Quærnknurrer, are sufficiently known.

When it suggested itself to the imagination to people the mountains, the earth and the water with supernatural beings, it could not be long before it must also give inhabitants to the boundless space above our heads. In the countless stars, in the extraordinary figures often assumed by the clouds and the mist, in the balls of fire and the blazing northern lights, in the pealing thunder and the wind howling through the narrow mountain-valleys, the uninstructed might easily see and hear the passing of the gods, the Aasgaardreia's wild course, the Trollwives' ride, and thence draw omens of impending misfortune. The lightning oftenest strikes downward among the high mountains, what then can be more reasonable than the belief that the god who reveals himself in thunder

and lightning, the mighty Thor, is chastising the demons of earth, who dwell in the places that have been struck by the lightning ?

Wicked, and injurious to man were the greater number of these supernatural beings, who may strictly be regarded as personified powers of nature, and as there hangs a degree of obscurity over their whole being, the night was supposed to be the season of their activity, when imagination and fear are most disposed to create all kinds of terrific images.

Although personified powers of nature are to be regarded as the primary elements of mythic tradition, it would, nevertheless, be a great error to suppose that every individual myth or tradition of supernatural beings can be explained on that principle. The explanation would in such case often be not only far-fetched but false; for, in the first place, many a myth, or some particular part of it, is mere poetic embellishment, and, secondly, it often contains an obscure tradition of the country's earliest history. An almost inscrutable blending of various traditions is a peculiar characteristic of a myth. In the representations of the gods and other beings, their wars and other relations, lies the oldest history of a people in the guise of a myth. That it must be dark and fabulous is a consequence both of its antiquity and the rudeness in which most nations live in their earliest infancy, when it never occurs to them, nor in fact have they the means, to transmit to after-ages accounts of their transactions. Consequently the earliest history of every people consists of traditions, which in the course of time may have been subjected to various changes. Through the mist that envelops the primitive history of

the North, the historic inquirer thinks that he discerns a struggle between the primitive inhabitants and a more civilized invading people; and in our popular traditions of Jutuls, Trolls, Elves and Dwarfs, are sought traces of these elder and more rugged people, the conquest and expulsion of whom, as dark monuments of times long gone by, is alluded to and eternized in the old skaldic songs and sagas [1].

That these primitive inhabitants consisted of one and the same people it is not necessary to assume. On the contrary, the great difference found in the sagas between the huge Jutul, who plays with fragments of rock, and the little wily dwarfs, who conceal themselves in the earth and its caverns, seems to indicate that they were as different as could well be, although in particular places they may have lived together, and combined in opposition to and as common enemies of the invading Goths. In some places it would seem as if the intruding conquerors had mingled with the older inhabitants, settled among them and formed intermarriages with them. "In ancient times," a Thellemark saga relates, "the Thusser were so numerous that Christians could not inhabit Norway, nor Norway be colónized, before they formed intermarriages." And in our old sagas mention frequently occurs of historic personages, who, on the father's or mother's side, descended from giants, or were 'half-trolls.'

In other places it would appear that it was only after

[1] Thor himself is made to relate that Norway in ancient times was inhabited by giants, who all perished suddenly except two women; but that after the people from the east countries began to inhabit the country, these women were a great annoyance, until Thor slew them. See the story in vol. i. p. 176.

an obstinate struggle that the original inhabitants were driven from the plains and valleys to the wooded and mountainous regions, where caves were their dwelling-places, the chase afforded them sustenance, and the skins of beasts covering. That they continued to stand in a hostile relation to their conquerors, and that, whenever an opportunity presented itself, they attacked, plundered and murdered the intruders, in the tracts nearest to their hiding-places, and then disappeared with their booty, is in the highest degree probable. Their sudden attacks and disappearance, the bloody traces they left behind them, their vast strength, savage aspect and garb, together with the darkness, under cover of which they chose to visit their enemies' stores or to attack them, must give to these people a terrific, demonlike colouring in the eyes of the peaceful inhabitants of the valley. The less often they showed themselves the more wonderful were the stories told of them; and so formidable did they at length appear, dressed out in all the terrors of imagination and superstition, that, according to the general opinion, it required powers greater than human to contend with them. It was, therefore, a fitting task for the Thunder-god himself, who sometimes crushed them with his bolt, or for his earthly representative, who in the old skaldic poem is described as the overthrower of the altars of the Forniotish gods, the mountain folk's, the fjeld-wolves', the sons of the rock's and the giants' terror and destroyer [1].

In the Norse Sagas we read not only of the mighty Jutuls, Giants (Riser) and Mountain-trolls, but also, and

[1] Comp. Thorsdrapa, pp. 16–22, and Thiodolf hin Hvinerske's poem Höstlanga, also Geijer's Svea Rikes Häfder, p. 276.

even more frequently, of Thusser and Dwarfs. The tradition of a former dwarf-race may probably in part be ascribed to an obscure reminiscence that the Lapps once, during Norway's savage state, inhabited tracts whence they have been driven away. If the diminutive Lapps were not formidable to the invading Goths in battle, they might, nevertheless, through their acquaintance with the secrets of nature, their cunning and their dexterity, be dangerous neighbours, who could drive off the cattle, change children (whence probably the numerous stories about changelings), steal household utensils and provisions, give persons stupefying drinks, entice them into their caves with songs, presents, etc., traits which supply us with the key to many a tradition of the subterraneans.

These views are confirmed by the testimony of history. Adam of Bremen, who lived in the eleventh century, relates from oral information given him by the Danish king Svend Estrithson, that in Sweden "there was a people who were in the habit of suddenly descending from the mountains in sledges, laying all around waste, unless most vigorously opposed, and then retiring." "In Norway," he says in another place, "I have heard there are wild women and men, who dwell in the forests, and seldom make their appearance; they use the skins of wild beasts for clothing, and their speech is more like the growling of animals than the talk of human beings, so that they are hardly intelligible to their neighbours."

At the first glance it must appear wonderful, that after Christianity has been established in the North for eight hundred years, there should still be so many remains of heathen superstitions there. On closer consideration,

however, the enigma may be solved. The first Christian teachers, finding the old ideas too deep-rooted, and, as it were, too fast interwoven with the physical condition of the country, its ancient history and poetry, to be immediately eradicated, strove to render the heathen superstition less offensive by giving it a Christian colouring. The heathen festivals, which had formerly been held in honour of the gods of Valhall, were now transferred to Christian saints, and in St. Olaf the Norse clergy were so fortunate as to get a saint of such high repute for his wonderful strength, that they could well place to his account the marvellous deeds that had been previously ascribed to the mighty Thor and the gods of Valhall. These latter, who were sometimes regarded by the Christians as mere human beings, and at others as evil spirits, were at length almost totally forgotten by the people, as it was but seldom that any visible sign appeared before them which could tend to retain them in remembrance; while belief in the other supernatural beings, that were attached to the surrounding nature, could not be so easily eradicated. As giants and other beings of that class had never been objects of adoration, but of hatred and aversion, they were allowed to retain their old denominations and character, and even served to confirm the Christian doctrine of the devil and his angels, among whom the giants and other supernatural beings were reckoned.

The Lutheran reformation, instead of checking this superstition as it had done many other errors, let it remain unheeded; the belief in the devil and his angels (the common name for the supernatural beings), together with their influence, both on mankind and all nature,

seems rather to have acquired new life. Persecutions for witchcraft, and assignments to the fiend belonged to the order of the day.

It was, it is true, considered an impiety to have any concern with the subterraneans and other such "petty devils;" but to the untutored and superstitious people it was a necessity to have some beings of whom they could ask counsel; and as the reformed clergy had made an end of the Catholic saints and relics, superstition was driven to betake itself secretly to its old heathen friends, the subterraneans, the Nisser, and the like, whose favour it was sought to gain, or whose enmity it was hoped to avert by offerings at hollow trees, in woods, or under vast, venerable stones, on a Thursday evening, or the eve of a holyday.

The more expanded ideas which began to prevail towards the end of the last century, and the increase of knowledge, which has manifested itself in so many ways in these latter times, have greatly contributed to diminish the belief in these supernatural beings. In many parts such traditions are already sunk into oblivion, in some they are regarded as pleasant stories, or are related merely to frighten children; while in other places, among the less enlightened and more superstitious peasantry, many are still to be found who are convinced of the existence of these mythic beings, who played so important a part in the imagination of their fathers. They themselves or, more usually, an aunt, a father or mother, have seen the underground folk and their dogs and cattle, heard their sweet music, known persons that have been taken into the fjelds, or had their infants changed for those of the subter-

raneans[1]. The places where such beings were supposed to have their resort are in some parts still looked upon

[1] We ought not in fact greatly to wonder that the belief in the subterranean people still finds followers among the uninstructed peasantry, when we read, that it is scarcely a hundred years since learned men disputed whether the subterraneans were created by God, whether they were pre-adamites, whether they can hold intercourse with mankind, etc. Herman Ruge, clergyman of Slidre in 1754, in his 'Rational Thoughts on various curious matters,' was of opinion "that the subterraneans formed, as it were, the boundary between brutes and human beings!" The said clergyman, Ruge, who has dedicated a whole chapter of his book to the subject of changelings, informs us (as an ancient method to be applied with regard to such children), that if a mother has been so unfortunate as to have her child changed, she must take the changeling on three successive Thursday evenings and whip it unmercifully with rods on a heap of sweepings; for then the subterranean mother, taking pity on her infant, will come and restore the genuine child and take back her own. The belief in changelings is universal also out of Norway. As many persons will, no doubt, be gratified to know what the great German reformer, Martin Luther, thought and said with regard to changelings, we will give an extract or two from his Table Talk: "Changelings (Wechselbalge) and Kielkropfs Satan lays in the place of the genuine children, that people may be tormented with them. He often carries off young maidens into the water, has intercourse with them, and keeps them with him until they have been delivered; then lays such children in cradles, takes the genuine children out, and carries them away. But such changelings, it is said, do not live more than eighteen or twenty years."

"In the year 1541 Dr. Luther mentioned this subject at table, adding, that he had told the Prince of Anhalt that such changelings should be drowned. On being asked why he had so advised? he answered, that it was his firm belief that such changelings were only a lump of flesh, a *massa carnis*, as there was no soul in them, for such the devil could easily make, as well as he can destroy men, who have body, reason and soul, when he possesses them bodily, so that they neither hear nor see nor feel anything; he makes them dumb, deaf and blind; the devil is therefore in such changelings as their soul."

"Eight years ago there was a changeling in Dessau, which I, Dr. Martin Luther, have both seen and touched; it was twelve years old and had all its senses, so that people thought it was a proper child; but that mattered little; for it only ate, and that as much as any four ploughmen or thrashers, and when any one touched it it screamed; when things in the house went wrong, so that any damage took place, it laughed and was merry; but if things went well, it cried. Thereupon I said to the Prince of Anhalt:

as sacred. No superstitious peasant, who has a regard for his health and property, dares venture to meddle with a Vættir-mound, a Butree or Thunbede, which is frequented by the invisible folk; but, on the contrary, that they may not, in their anger, pass their dwelling and take the luck of the house with them, the people wait upon them on holyday eves with cakes, sweet porridge and other offerings[1].

An example or two will serve to show how deeply imprinted is the belief in the subterraneans, in many places, even at the present day. "At Lurö in the Northlands," the Rev. G. Faye writes to me, "an incredible degree of superstition prevails, particularly with regard to the subterraneans, who have their sojourn in certain places, how they take in persons and make away with them; they are even said to have a church somewhere here in the parish, of which one of my parishioners, a great ghost-seer, is, as I am told, the priest. It is, moreover, said that in the neighbourhood of the parsonage there dwelt a subterranean,

'If I were prince or ruler here, I would have this child thrown into the water, into the Moldau that flows by Dessau, and would run the risk of being a homicide.' But the Elector of Saxony, who was then at Dessau, and the Prince of Anhalt would not follow my advice. I then said: 'They ought to cause a Pater noster to be said in the church, that God would take the devil away from them.' That was done daily at Dessau, and the said changeling died two years after." See Dobeneck, i. p. 168.

Then follows a story almost identical with 'The Kielkropp' in vol. iii. p. 46.

[1] "In Moland, in the Upper Thellemark," writes Pastor Buch, "they paid adoration to the Thusser, under the name of *Vetir*, by offering to them some of their best meat and drink, upon up-raised mounds, particularly buttermilk, or wort when they brewed. Such a libation was called a *saup*, i. e. a sup or gulp. Those who had not such Vetir-mounds poured out a little cup of drink on the hearth. The friendship of these beings was very useful to the peasant both for his cattle and general welfare."

who had a pleasure-boat, whom people that were *synsk* often saw sailing on the lake. I have repeatedly endeavoured to talk them out of this superstition; but before me they will never confess that they entertain such belief; because, as I afterwards learned, they think it is to the priest's advantage to suppress all belief in the subterraneans: 'For,' say they, 'he is as sensible of it as we are; he has read it in the sixth book of Moses, which does not, it is true, stand in the Bible, but which the priests keep to themselves.'" That the Sönderfjeld Norwegians stand on about the same level with regard to belief in the subterraneans will appear from the following traditions, but to which I will add a passage from my college days.

In company with some University friends, I undertook, in the summer of 1824, a foot-journey to the Riukanfoss and Gaustafjeld. As a guide on the Gausta, we took an active peasant from Vestfiorddal, a man singularly well-informed for his station, but who was, nevertheless, thoroughly convinced of the existence of the subterraneans. "I once myself," said he, "saw in the fjeld a man who suddenly sank down in the earth before my eyes, and it is well known," added he, "that one of the subterraneans, who in outward appearance perfectly resembled one of us, courted a girl who rejected him, although he promised her a house, chattels and as much silver plate as she desired." On our objecting that either his imagination must have played him a trick, and the courtship have been a mere idle invention on the part of the girl; or that some person for a joke had imposed upon her, by giving himself out for a subterranean, he continued: "But it is known for certain, that a man, who one day went into the

forest, came suddenly upon a mansion with its appurtenances, the inmates of which, on his coming, instantly abandoned it. The man, who from fear of troll-craft did not venture to take up his abode in the mansion, announced the incident to the authorities, who took possession of the place in the king's name, which to this day, in remembrance of the event, bears the name of *Findland*." As we still continued incredulous, and suggested that the persons mentioned might have been culprits, who on the man's coming betook themselves to flight, through fear of being discovered, our guide came forth with his last and weightiest argument: "But it stands in the Bible, that every knee, both of those who are in heaven and on earth, and *under* the earth, shall bow before the Lord. And who then are those under the earth, if they are not the subterraneans?" Thus may even passages in the Bible itself, when misunderstood, serve to confirm superstition!

Having thus endeavoured to explain how the belief in these supernatural beings originated, and by some examples shown that in certain parts of the country it is still the popular belief, it only remains to lay before the reader a slight sketch of the similar ideas and kindred superstitions existing in the other Northern countries. In this sketch we shall confine ourselves chiefly to the subterraneans, who, according to both the old mythology and the popular traditions, are divided into several classes, as Thusser, Vættir, Dwarfs, Elves, etc. In the old mythology the dwarfs—under which denomination seem to be comprised several of the species which now constitute the subterraneans—play an important part. They came forth, as we have already seen, as maggots in the rotten carcase of

the giant Ymir, and at the behest of the gods received human form and understanding, and had habitations assigned them in the earth and in stones[1].

From these we may consider the subterraneans in all the Northern countries to derive their origin. We will first direct our attention to Iceland. As in Norway, the subterraneans here also dwell in hills and mounds, they are neat and cleanly, comely and flighty, readily hold converse with Christians, by whom they formerly had children. These they strove to exchange for the children of Christians before they were baptized, that their own might enjoy the benefit of baptism. Such substituted children were called *Umskiptingar*, and are usually stupid and weakly. The subterraneans have beautiful cattle, which, like themselves, are invisible, though they sometimes let themselves be seen in the bright sunshine, which they lack in their dwellings, and in which they therefore from time to time recreate themselves. On New Year's night they sometimes change their habitations, at which time it was formerly a custom in Iceland to leave well-provided tables standing, and the doors open, in order to gain the good will both of the comers and goers. According to old traditions, the subterraneans of Iceland were governed by two chieftains, who are changeable every second year, when, accompanied by some of their subjects, they sailed to Norway, to appear before the king of the whole race, who had his residence there, to renew their oath of fealty,

[1] See vol. i. p. 9. According to one tradition, the subterraneans descend from Adam's children by his first wife Lileth. Goethe alludes to her in Faust.

and render an account of their administration, which, if found good and just, was continued to them; but in the contrary case they were instantly deposed; justice and equity being in high estimation among these elves[1].

In the Farö isles the subterraneans are, as in some parts of Norway, called Huldefolk, and resemble the Norse Vættir, being described as full-grown, clad in grey, with black hats. Their large, fat cattle graze, though invisible, among those of the inhabitants; a sight of them is, however, sometimes obtained, as also of their dogs. They are fond of Christian females and of their children, which they exchange for their own.

In Sweden the people have nearly the same ideas with regard to the subterraneans. Of their origin they have a singular tradition, viz. that they are fallen angels, and that when God cast down from heaven the adherents of Lucifer, they did not all fall into hell, but that some fell on the earth, others into the sea. Those that fell in the woods and forests became *Wood-trolls* (Skovtroll, Skogsmufvor); those that fell in the green fields and groves, *Vættir* or *Lysgubbar*; those that were cast into the sea or waters became *Näcker*; those that fell among houses, *Tomtegubbar*, and those in trees, *Elfvar*.

In Denmark we meet with the same ideas as in the rest of Scandinavia, though, in consequence of the nature of the country, somewhat modified. The subterraneans there dwell in mounds, in which they often have merry-makings; they brew, bake, steal beer from the peasants,

[1] Finni Johannæi Hist. Eccles. Islandiæ, ii. p. 368; Pref. to Hist. Hrolfi Krakii; F. Magnusen; Eddalære, iii. p. 308.

if they neglect to mark the casks with a cross, punish tattlers with blindness, cannot endure the sound of bells, thunder, drums or water, are jealous, and can transform themselves into cats. Steel, as needles, keys, scissors and the like, either laid in the cradle or crosswise over the door, will, as in Sweden, prevent them from exchanging children; but if such an exchange is accomplished, there is no other remedy than to ill-treat the changeling.

The subterraneans or dwarfs of Germany resemble their Scandinavian brethren, and are officious, good-humoured and patient; they wear a *mist-mantle* or cap (Nebelkappe), which renders them invisible. They also exchange children; and if the changeling is ill-treated, its mother brings back the stolen child. The black dwarfs of Rügen bear a near resemblance to the Norwegian dwarfs; they are ugly of aspect, but are able smiths, particularly in steel, are unsocial, seldom leave their hills and mounds, and are no lovers of music. The white dwarfs, on the contrary, who in summer sport among the trees and dance on the grass, resemble the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian elves. With the brown dwarfs of Rügen, who are eighteen inches high, wear glass shoes, have delicate hands and feet, are skilful smiths, but roguish, there are none to be compared.

In Pomerania there was formerly a number of earth-sprites or dwarfs, who eagerly exchanged their own ugly offspring for comely, human children. They also fell in love with handsome girls and courted them. By day they crawled about in the form of toads and other reptiles, but at night they appeared in their own form, and danced

merrily by moonlight. The people called them *Uellerkens*. Like the Nisser, they often lived in cellars. The German subterraneans differ from those of Scandinavia, in having adopted the true faith, and in sometimes wandering abroad.

SCANDINAVIAN POPULAR TRADITIONS.

I.

NORWEGIAN TRADITIONS.

THURSER, VÆTTER, DWARFS, ETC.

In Norway the subterranean people—under which denomination are comprised Thurser (Thusser), Vætter and Dwarfs, and sometimes Huldres, Nisser and Elves—are exceedingly numerous. The Thusser or Trolls, who are as large as men, inhabit the mountain-ridges and hills. In former days they were in such multitudes that no Christians could dwell in Norway, until they formed marriages with them. Like ourselves, they have houses, churches, chattels, and beautiful cattle, which graze in the night, and are watched by female keepers and black dogs. The Thusser are well formed, but of a pale or blue colour. When the sun is set and the twilight (Thus-mörk) begins, they are in full activity; then it is dangerous for persons, more particularly young females, for whom they have an especial liking, to pass by the places where they resort, where most delightful music is to be heard; and many are the instances, particularly in former days, of young maidens

having been conveyed by them into the mountains and hills. They are also partial to little children, and formerly would often exchange them for their own, which were neither so handsome nor so thriving. But a cross made on the child, or steel in any shape laid in its cradle, is an effectual preventive of all such exchanges [1].

With respect to these supernatural beings, the belief current in the North is, that when our Lord cast down the fallen angels, some fell to hell, while those who had not sinned so deeply were dispersed in the air, and under the earth, and in the waters [2].

A similar belief with regard to fairies prevails in Ireland. Keightley, F. M. p. 363.

HULDRA OR HULLA.

Over the whole of Norway the tradition is current of a supernatural being that dwells in the forests and mountains, called Huldra or Hulla. She appears like a beautiful woman, and is usually clad in a blue petticoat and a white snood; but unfortunately has a long tail, like a cow's, which she anxiously strives to conceal, when she is among people. She is fond of cattle, particularly brindled [3], of which she possesses a beautiful and thriving stock. They are without horns. She was once at a merry-making, where every one was desirous of dancing with the handsome, strange damsel; but in the midst of the mirth, a young man, who had just begun a dance with her, happened to cast his eye on her tail. Immediately guessing whom he had got for a partner, he was not a little terrified; but collecting himself, and unwilling to betray her, he merely said to her, when the dance was over, "Fair maid, you will lose your garter." She instantly vanished, but afterwards rewarded the silent and consi-

[1] Faye, p. 20. [2] Asbjörnsen, Huldreeventyr, i. 29.
[3] In the original *brandede*, the meaning of which is doubtful.

derate youth with beautiful presents and a good breed of cattle [1].

The idea entertained of this being is not everywhere the same, but varies considerably in different parts of Norway. In some places she is described as a handsome female, when seen in front, but is hollow behind, or else blue [2]; while in others she is known by the name of *Skogsnerte*, and is said to be blue, but clad in a green petticoat, and probably corresponds to the Swedish *Skogsnufvor* [3]. Her song —a sound often heard among the mountains—is said to be hollow and mournful [4], differing therein from the music of the subterranean beings, which is described by ear-witnesses as cheerful and fascinating. But she is not everywhere regarded as a solitary wood-nymph: Huldre-men and Huldre-folk are also spoken of, who live together in the mountains, and are almost identical with the subterranean people. In Hardanger the Huldre-people are always clad in green, but their cattle are blue, and may be taken when a grown-up person casts his belt over them. They give abundance of milk. The Huldres take possession of the forsaken pasture-spots in the mountains, and invite people into their mounds, where delightful music is to be heard [5].

The belief in Huldra is very ancient. We read that as far back as the year 1205, the queen of Magnus Lagabæter, when detained by an adverse wind at Bergen, having heard that the Icelander Sturli Thordsen was an excellent story-teller, desired him to relate to her the Saga of the giantess Huldra. Her name appears to be derived from the Old Norsk hollr, *fidus, propitius* [6].

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[1] Faye, p. 39. [2] Hallager, Norsk Ordsamling, p. 18, *voce* Huldre.

[3] Linnæi Gotländske Resa, p. 312.

[4] "Huldre dwells in the mountains and in the valley; hers are all the riches, splendour and beauty of the North; but hers is also its deep melancholy; to this her music and her song bear witness, which cannot be heard without a feeling of sadness and tears." Norske Huldreeventyr, i. p. iv.

[5] Faye, p. 42. [6] Sagabibl. i. 367. Grimm, D. M. p. 249.

JUTULS AND MOUNTAIN-GIANTS.

The Jutul is large and strong, and has his dwelling in the highest mountains, where riches and costly treasures are to be found in abundance. He is of evil disposition, hates churches and the sound of bells, and is greedy after Christian blood. When a storm is at hand, or a whirlwind howls among the rocks, he shakes himself in the mountain, so that the pots and kettles resound, in which his wife Gyvri or Giögra prepares their food. All over the country traditions and traces of these monstrous beings are to be found. Marks of their footsteps are often to be seen in the mountains.

Of all the supernatural beings of the North, none bear so evident a mark of high antiquity as the gigantic Jutuls. The traditions concerning them rise always to the monstrous, and harmonize with the cloud-capt mountains among which they dwell.

On comparing the traditions of the vulgar with the old mythology, we find a great accordance between them, and at once recognise in the Jutuls and Röser (giants) the Jötuns and Risar, the foes of gods and men, who in Thor, the mighty god of thunder, found a dangerous enemy. The Jötuns in the Northern mythology are considered as chaotic beings, ruling over the dark and cold regions of the earth, shunning the light of day, and by the sun's rays (as we have already seen) [1] becoming changed to stone [2].

In Old Norse a giantess was called *gýfr* or *gýgr*, a word to be recognised in the Gyvri and Giögra of the vulgar.

Besides Jutuls or Jötuns, we meet with Riser and Biergriser (giants and mountain-giants), who dwelt in mountain-caves, and are supposed to be the earliest inhabitants of the North. In the Sagas they are often called Trolls, which may be considered a common denomination for all noxious, supernatural beings.

[1] See vol. i. p. 8, *note* [3]. [2] Faye, p. 7.

THE JUTUL ON HESTMANDÖE [1].

On Hestmandöe in the Nordlands there is a mountain, which at a distance resembles a horseman with a large cloak over him. This mountain was once a Jutul, who dwelt on the spot. Twelve miles to the south, on Leköe in Nummedal, there lived at the same time a maiden to whom he made love; but the haughty damsel, who was skilled in all kinds of magic, not only rejected him, but turned all his messengers to stone, who are still to be seen as rocks round the northern part of the isle. Exasperated at such conduct, the Jutul bent his bow, to take instantaneous vengeance. The mighty arrow flew and passed clean through the lofty mountain called Torgehat, where is still to be seen the large hole made by the arrow through the hard rock [2]. "That straw stands in the way," exclaimed the Jutul. Being somewhat checked in its flight, by forcing its way through the Torgehat, the arrow did not quite reach its destination, but fell at the feet of the maiden on the north side of Leköe, where it yet lies in the form of a huge, long stone. By their mutual magic they were both changed to stone, and shall so remain, looking on each other until doomsday.

Even at the present time a Nordlander seldom sails by without taking his hat off to the maid of Leköe[3].

THE JUTUL'S BRIDGE.

In Spirillen, at low water, a sort of stone bridge is to be seen, about the eighth of a mile in length. It owes its origin to a Jutul that dwelt on the Elsrudkolle. This Jutul courted a Huldra on the Engerkolle, which lies on the opposite side of the water. That he might visit her

[1] Horseman's isle.

[2] That the size of the hole is considerable, may be inferred from its height, which is estimated at 600 feet.

[3] Faye, p. 13.

without getting wet, which sorely grieved his beloved, he resolved to construct a bridge, but burst in pieces, when the sun rose and surprised him at his work [1].

THE GIRL AT THE SÆTER [2].

A land proprietor in Norway was betrothed to a very pretty young woman, who, although a farmer's daughter, went out with the cattle to their summer pasture, where she employed herself in weaving a piece of drill. Being, however, unable to finish her work by the time when the cattle should return home, she resolved to stay behind till she had accomplished her task: but no sooner had her lover received intelligence of her design, than he set out for the pasture, justly thinking it hazardous to leave the damsel alone exposed to the attempts of Huldres and other subterranean beings. He reached the spot in the nick of time, for he found the cattle-house surrounded by black horses ready saddled. Suspecting, therefore, that there was something wrong in the wind, he stole into the pasture, and peeping through a little window in the hut, saw his intended sitting in a bridal dress with a golden crown on her head, and by her side an old red-eyed Huldreman. Seizing his pistol, which he had wisely loaded with a silver bullet [3], he fired over the head of the girl, before the witchery could be dissolved, rushed into the hut, seized her, placed her behind him on his horse, and rode off, followed by the whole company of Trolls. One of these held out to him a well-filled golden horn, to retard his flight: he took

[1] Faye, p. 15, and vol. i. p. 8, *note* [3].

[2] The Sætere are grassy spots among the mountains of Norway, to which the cattle are sent for summer pasture. They are frequently a considerable distance from the dwelling.

[3] Great in the good days of yore was the efficacy of a silver bullet, or a silver button, when fired at a witch, or wizard, or the like. See Anecdotes and Traditions, by Thoms (Camd. Publ.) pp. 111, 112, and the note.

the horn, but cast the liquor it contained behind his horse, and galloped off with both horn and girl. At length he reached a steep mountain near his dwelling, in which some subterranean folk had their abode, who were on terms of hostility with his pursuers, and who cried to him, "Ride on the rough, and not on the smooth." He followed their advice, and rode through a rye-field, where the Trolls were unable to follow him, but in their exasperation cried after him, "The red cock shall crow over thy dwelling[1]." And behold! his house stood in a blaze[2].

GURRI KUNNAN[3].

At Osterraad there dwelt formerly a rich and powerful man, who had a daughter named Aslaug, the fairest damsel far and near. She had, as may be easily imagined, many a gallant suitor, but she preferred to every other a young man who had been fostered with her in her father's mansion, notwithstanding that he was of low extraction. As they could not hope that the proud father would consent to their union, they fled secretly, and sought concealment and shelter in a deep cave, which is to be seen at this day not far from Osterraad. By chance the enraged father, in the following spring, got intelligence of the place where his daughter was concealed, and instantly proceeded thither, for the purpose of punishing the audacious seducer; but just as he reached the cave there fell down such a quantity of stones and rubbish, that the entrance was completely closed, so that the fugitives were

[1] The symbol of a red cock for fire is of remote antiquity (See Völuspá, 34, 35). "I will set a red cock on your roof," is the incendiary's threat in Germany, where fire is compared to a cock flying from house to house. Grimm, D. M. p. 568.

[2] Faye, p. 25.

[3] Mr. Keightley (F. M. p. 130) gives a more elaborate version of this story from an oral tradition communicated to Dr. Grimm, and inserted in Hauff's Märchenalmanach for 1827. The simpler form, in which it here appears, I take to be the older.

not to be taken. When the first danger was over, the loving pair succeeded, though with difficulty, in working their way out from amid the fallen stones. They then took a boat, that was lying near the shore, and through many perils succeeded in reaching the uninhabited group of islands called Tarven, which at that time served as a retreat for Trolls. The chief among these, the Huldre, Gurri Kunnan, received them kindly, and allowed them to stay in her habitation, though on condition that they should never make the sign of the cross, which she could not endure. One Yule-eve, when Gurri, with a countless number of Trolls, were assembled at a festivity, the wonder-struck Aslaug forgot her promise and crossed herself, at the same time pronouncing the name of Jesus. On a sudden all the witchery vanished, and of the whole parade a huge copper kettle alone remained, which for time out of mind has since been kept in the largest isle of the group, the now inhabited Hunsöe[1].

This Gurri was the daughter of a giant, who dwelt on the isle of Kunnan off Helgeland. Being very beautiful, she had many suitors, who fought for the possession of the fair giantess, and round about Kunnan[2] is to be seen a cluster of rocks formed of the stones they hurled at each other. All were, however, forced to cede to the giant Anfind, who married the beautiful Gurri, and lived happily with her, until her father was slain, together with the powerful 'Sout,' by the mighty 'Gout,' who came from the east, when the whole family was driven from Kunnan, and Anfind with his wife sought shelter with Fröi, who gave them Tarven for a residence. Here they lived in

[1] The other isles are used merely for the grazing of cattle, in consequence of the superstition that no one can inhabit them, on account of the Trolls and other devilish beings. The copper kettle, as I have been assured, is still preserved by the inhabitants of the isle.

[2] Kunnen is a promontory on the north side of Helgeland.

peace until St. Olaf came to the island, who, with the sign of the cross and the name of Jesus, not only quelled the storm that the giant had raised, but turned the giant himself into a hard block of stone[1].

The above is the story on which the beautiful poem of 'Gurri Kunnan' is founded. Its author, Professor Steenblock, kindly communicated the tradition to me, as he had heard it in his youth. A prose paraphrase of the poem is given in the 'Mythologie der Feen und Elfen,' by Prof. Wolff, i. 234. This in many respects interesting story seems to point to a remote antiquity, when the original inhabitants of the North were forced to retire before the invading Goths (the 'Gout' of the tradition), who, by means of their greater civilization and superior skill, destroyed or expelled their adversaries[2].

THE BRIDAL CROWN.

I.

In Nummedal there once lived a young girl so beautiful that a Thuss fell in love with her; but notwithstanding that he promised her a sumptuous mansion, abundance of cattle, and in short whatever she could desire, if she would betroth herself to him, she continued faithful to her old lover. When the Thuss found that nothing was to be done by gentle means, he carried her off. Accompanied by a numerous body of Thusser, he was already on his road with his prey to the subterranean people's church, there to be married to her, when her lover was so fortunate as to get traces of their route. Having overtaken the bridal party, he shot with steel over his betrothed's head, when the whole witchery vanished, and he not alone recovered the maiden, but got a splendid silver crown, which the Thuss had placed on her head. The crown still exists in the 'dal,' and as it is supposed to bring good luck to every bride that wears it, it is let out at almost every wedding of the better class.

[1] See vol. i. p. 8, *note* [3].

[2] Faye, p. 10. Henceforth when no authority is given, the traditions are generally from Faye.

II.

It is not long beyond the memory of man since a young man in Nummedal, when passing by a forsaken sæter-hut, saw in it a gay Huldre-wedding party. Through a window he was witness to all that passed among the mountain-folk; but his attention was chiefly directed to the bride, by her beauty and elegant attire, especially by a massive, glittering silver crown that she wore. The young man continued gazing on her till he contracted a violent passion for her, and soon resolved on depriving the wedding party of their mirth, and the bridegroom of his rich and lovely bride. Quickly he drew forth his knife, and as quickly flew the shining steel through the window and over the head of the bride. The company vanished in the twinkling of an eye, the maiden alone remaining spell-bound by the steel. The pair came soon to an understanding; the Huldre bride accompanied him to the village and then to the altar, after having been baptized. But her magnificent bridal attire was insufficient to withdraw attention from an ugly cow's tail, which, however, after a time, gradually disappeared. They lived long and happy together, and of her rich wedding ornaments, the fame of which is yet preserved, there is still to be seen at Mærabru the costly silver crown.

THE BISHOP'S CATTLE.

One summer, a long time ago, the bishop of Drontheim sent his cattle to the mountains to graze. They were the finest cattle in all Norway; and the bishop, when he sent them away, strictly enjoined those who were to watch them, not, on any account, to suffer them, for one moment, to be out of sight, as the mountains thereabouts swarmed with subterranean people, who, however, had no power over any animal, as long as it was under a human eye. The cattle were then sent up to the mountains. One

day, while the animals were grazing, and the keepers sitting in various places with their eyes directed towards them, there appeared suddenly, on the highest point of the mountain, an elk of an extraordinary size. At this apparition, the eyes of the three keepers were drawn off from the cattle, and for an instant fixed on the elk; but when they again looked down into the valley, they saw their beautiful large cattle transformed to a set of diminutive mice, running along the mountain's side, and before the keepers could approach them, they all vanished through a crevice in the earth. Thus did the bishop of Drontheim get rid of his three hundred head of cattle.

Conway, in his 'Journey through Norway,' p. 240, relates this story, and adds: "This tradition is universally credited in the mountainous parts." A woman, who was watching cattle on a hill, was more fortunate: she saw her cattle suddenly vanish, but while she was bewailing her loss, she heard a voice from the mountain, desiring her to hasten home, and lo! there she found not only her own cows, but also a new one, which, although it never calved, yet had a greater abundance of milk than the others.

THE MIDWIFE.

There was once a man and his wife that had an only daughter. Suddenly she disappeared, and notwithstanding that her parents—who took the loss of their dear child sorely to heart—sought for her in every direction, they could not discover the faintest trace of her. A considerable time had elapsed, when late one evening there came a stranger to the house and asked the woman, who was at home alone, whether she would visit her daughter, who abode in the neighbourhood, and was in labour, and required her aid. The mother, who was both glad and grieved at this unexpected intelligence, instantly made herself ready, and by means of a thread, which the stranger gave her, was in one moment with her daughter, who gave birth to a lively, well-formed child. Before it was dressed, the man gave her a liquid, desiring her to rub it over the

infant's body, at the same time cautioning her not to let any of it come in contact with herself. But her eye beginning to itch, she inadvertently rubbed it, and thus got some of the liquid in her eye. When her help was no longer required, the man—who was her daughter's husband and a Troll—told her she might depart, when by means of the thread she found herself in a few seconds again at home. The following day, while at work with her husband in the field, she on a sudden saw her daughter with her subterranean spouse walking close at her side. On her addressing them, her son-in-law asked her with astonishment, whether she really could see them? "Yes, surely, I can see you with my right eye," said the woman; but at the same instant the Troll touched her eye, and from that time she saw no more with it.

The superstition of anointing the eyes, and being thereby enabled to see what would else be invisible, appears to have been generally current among the inhabitants of western Europe, both Keltic and Germanic. Instances of its prevalence in Denmark we shall see hereafter; of its existence in other countries, our own included, we give the following proofs.

Mrs. Bray (Letters to Southey) relates a story of the *sage femme* of Tavistock, who was one night summoned to a fairy labour, and who, on receiving an ointment to rub the child's eyes with (thinking, no doubt, that what was good for the baby must be equally so for herself), applied a little of it to one of her own eyes, when lo! all things around her suddenly appeared in their true form, all delusion was dissipated. On the next market day she saw the old fellow who had conveyed her, pilfering from the stalls in the market, and accosted him. "What," exclaimed he, "do you see me to-day?" "See you! to be sure I do, and I see you are busy too." "And pray with which eye do you see all this?" "With my right." "Take that for meddling with what did not belong to you: you shall see me no more." He then struck her eye, and from that hour till the day of her death she was blind of that eye[1].

A similar story is related of a cottager and his wife at Nether Whitton.

The author of 'Round about our Coal fire' (quoted by Brand, Pop. Antiq.) says, "The moment any one saw them (the fairies), and took notice of them, they were struck blind of an eye[2]."

Ritson (Fairy Tales) relates that a woman who had been in their (the

[1] Keightley, F. M. p. 301. [2] Ib. p. 298.

fairies') society, challenged one of the guests, whom she espied in the market selling fairy-butter. This freedom was deeply resented, and cost her the eye she first saw him with[1].

In a Scottish tradition it is related that a fairy left a child to be suckled with a young woman of Nithsdale, and rubbed her eyes with a wonderful salve, by virtue of which she could discern the otherwise invisible fairy folk. Some of the salve she contrived to secure. Happening one day to meet the fairy lady, she attempted to shake hands with her. "What ee d' ye see me wi?" whispered she. "Wi them baith," said the woman. The fairy breathed on her eyes, and the salve lost its efficacy[2].

Mr. Keightley relates (F. M. p. 417), from a communication made to him by a lady in North Wales, of a gipsy, that desired the narrator, who wished to see fairies, to meet her by moonlight on the top of Craig y Dinis. She there washed his eyes with the contents of a phial which she had, and he instantly saw thousands of fairies, all in white, dancing to the sound of numerous harps.

Gervase of Tilbury, who lived in the 12th century (I quote from Dobeneck, i. 45), speaks of certain water-sprites in the south of France called *Drakes*. These assume a human form and appear in the public market. They are said to inhabit the caverns of rivers, and to allure women and children while bathing, under the form of gold rings and cups, striving to obtain which they are suddenly dragged down to the bottom. This oftenest happens to women giving suck, whom the Drakes seize to suckle their own unblest offspring. These, after seven years thus past, sometimes return rewarded to our hemisphere. They relate that with the Drakes and their wives they dwelt in spacious palaces in the caverns and banks of the rivers. ..... On *men* thus seized the Drakes are said to feed. One day a Drake having given a woman in his service some eel-pasty, she happened to draw her fingers, greasy with the fat, over one eye and one side of her face, and thereby acquired a most clear and sharp power of vision under water. Having completed the third year of her servitude, and being returned home, she one morning early met the Drake in the market-place of Beaucaire, whom she accosted, and inquired after her mistress and nursling. "With which eye did you recognise me?" asked the Drake. She pointed to the eye she had greased with the fat of the pasty. Having ascertained this, the Drake thrust his finger into that eye, and thus continued thenceforth unseen and unknown by all.

A story somewhat similar is told of a Countess Ranzau.

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[1] Keightley, F. M. p. 309.

[2] Cromek's Remains of Nithsdale and Galloway Song, quoted by Keightley, p. 353.

THE ÖIESTAD HORN.

Near the river Nid in Nedenæs there is a mansion called Neersteen, in which there once dwelt a man named Siur, who was both powerful and rich; for besides Neersteen he owned six other mansions, and a considerable salmon fishery in the Nid; but what was more than all these, he had a daughter, who was the fairest maid of all the surrounding neighbourhood. She was courted by a Westland man named Ring, but the wealthy Siur rejected him for a son-in-law, although his daughter was fondly attached to him. The lover, however, was not disheartened, so while the father one St. John's day was at matins in Öiestad church, Ring came to the mansion and found his lass, although her father had taken the precaution of locking her up in one of the presses—which, according to the custom of the time, were made at the foot of the bed—a corner of her apron having protruded and betrayed her. They now fled, and Siur, the instant he was apprized of their elopement, mounted his horse and went in pursuit of them. On the way he was stopped by a Troll, who came out of a mount, and bade him welcome, at the same time presenting to him a full drinking-horn. Instead of emptying it, he cast its contents behind him, but some drops that fell on the horse's loins instantly singed the hair off. Siur, who had from the first suspected mischief, put spurs to his horse, and galloped away with the horn in his hand and the Troll whining after him. He was now in a most serious dilemma, from which he was unexpectedly rescued by another Troll, who was on terms of hostility with the former one, who called to him when he had just reached a large field: "Ride through the rye and not through the wheat." Following this counsel he got the start of his pursuer, who could not proceed so rapidly through the tall rye. The danger was not, however, com-

pletely over until he came near the mansion of Bringsvær, when the cock crew and the Troll vanished. Siur now continued his pursuit without further delays, and overtook the fugitives on a hill where they had stopt to take a few moments rest. When the men got sight of each other, they immediately drew their knives, and a contest ensued, the result of which was, that Siur stabbed Ring in the belly, who instantly gave up the ghost.

In expiation of this homicide, Siur was compelled to make heavy compensation. The horn, which he kept, was preserved in the family down to our times. Of the daughter's fate tradition makes no mention.

The (or rather *a*) horn, which had long been an heirloom in Siur's family, has lately been presented by Shipmaster Berge to the public library and museum of Arendal school, where it now is. It is very handsome, and has on its three silver-gilt rings the following inscription, in monkish characters: *potum servorum benedic deus alme* [*tuorum reliqvam unus benede le un*]*? caspar, melchior, baltazar.*

A similar occurrence to the above took place many years ago near Hahauger in Hallingdal, where one Christmas eve a subterranean woman presented drink in a horn to a man named Gudbrand Goelberg, which he threw over his shoulder and rode off with the horn; but down to the ninth generation, his posterity, as a penalty, were afflicted with some bodily blemish or defect, as the Troll had threatened. This horn, which was long preserved at Halsteensgaard in Aal, contained nearly three quarts, and was encircled by a strong gilt copper ring about three inches broad, on which, in monkish characters, stood *melchior, baltazar, caspar.* In the middle was a small, gilt copper plate, in which an oval crystal was set.

HULDRE MARRIAGE.

It is related that an active young fellow in Nordland, by laying the barrel of his rifle over a Huldre in a forest, got her into his power and made her his wife. They lived happily together and had a child; but on a sudden, as the child was one evening playing by the fireplace, where the Huldre was sitting and spinning, while the man was at his work, something of her savage nature came over her, during which she said to her husband, alluding to

the child, that it would make a capital roast for supper. The man was horrified, and the woman, who was conscious that she had grievously committed herself, changed her tone, and begged her words might be forgotten. But they were not: the man bore them in remembrance; the horrid sounds rung incessantly in his ears; he perceived in them a proof of his now no longer blooming wife's real nature, and their domestic peace was at an end. From being a good man he became morose, frequently upbraided his wife with her diabolical proposal, cursed the hour when he resolved on marrying her, beat and ill-used her. Thus it continued for a season. The woman suffered and repented. One day she went to the smithy, to see with a friendly eye her husband at his work; but he began as before, and on its coming to blows, she, by way of proving her superior strength, seized an iron bar and twisted it round her husband as if it had been a wire. The husband was now forced to submission and to promise domestic peace.

THE NISSE OR NISS.

This is a supernatural being, nearly resembling our Goblin, the Scottish Brownie, the German Kobold, and the Kaboutermanneken of the Netherlands. In the good old times they were infinitely more numerous than they are in our days. They are not larger than small children, are clothed in grey, and wear a red, pointed cap. Their habitation is usually in barns and stables, where they help to tend the cattle and horses, for which they show the same partiality as for men. There are many instances of the Nisse having drawn the hay from the cribs of the other horses to that of the one for which he entertains a predilection. He is fond of pranks, will sometimes let all the cows loose in the cowhouse, plague the milkmaids, either by blowing out the light, or by holding the hay so fast

that the poor girls cannot draw out a particle; then, while they are tugging with all their might, he will suddenly let go his hold, so that they fall at full length on the ground. This delights the Nisse exceedingly, and causes him to set up a horse-laugh. If he feels attached to the master of the house, he will do all he can for his benefit. Instances, indeed, are not wanting of his having endeavoured to abstract hay and other things from his neighbours, for the use of his master; whence contention and conflicts sometimes take place between the Nisser of the two houses, so that the hay and straw may be seen flying about in all directions. As they are obliging to those they favour, but spiteful and vindictive when any one slights or makes game of them, it is not surprising that their good will is deemed worth the gaining. On Christmas eve, therefore, and on Thursday evenings, in many places, they set sweet porridge, cakes, beer, etc. for the Nisse, which he gladly consumes, provided they are to his taste; for he is sometimes dainty. Ridicule and contempt he cannot endure, and as he is strong, notwithstanding his diminutive size, his opponent often comes off second best. A peasant, who one winter evening met a Nisse on the road, and in an authoritative tone ordered him to get out of the way, found himself, before he knew a word of the matter, pitched over the hedge into a field of snow. With a girl also, who one Christmas eve brought him food accompanied with mockery, he danced such a dance, that she was found, on the following morning, lying dead in the barn.

They love the moonlight, and in winter may sometimes be seen amusing themselves in little sledges, or in leaping over the fences. Although they are lively, yet they do not at all times like noise and bustle, particularly on Christmas eve, or a Thursday evening. In general the Nisse is liked, and is, therefore, in many places called *good fellow*.

Of all the beings that live in the imagination of the Norwegian peasantry, the Nisse is that of whose existence they are the most thoroughly convinced. Though belonging to the dwarf-race, he nevertheless differs from the dwarfs by his sprightliness and well-proportioned figure, as well as by his sojourn in houses and barns, for which his predilection is so strong, that he cannot endure a removal; for he will then forsake the family, and take their good luck with him. It is this partiality to old tofts that has obtained for him the names of Toft-vætte, Tomtevætte[1], and Gardbo.

Neither in the Eddas nor the Sagas is there any mention of the Nisse. Akin to him are, the Niägriusar of the Færöe isles, who are described as diminutive, with red caps, and bringers of luck; also the Swedish Tomtegubbe.

They frequently dwell in the high trees that are planted round the house, on which account care should be taken not to fell them, particularly the more ancient ones. Many a one has paid for his disregard herein by an incurable disease[2].

THE WERWOLF.

That there were persons who could assume the form of a wolf or a bear (Huse-björn), and again resume their own, is a belief as wide-spread as it is ancient. This property is either imparted by Trollmen, or those possessing it are themselves Trolls. In the Volsunga Saga we have very early traces of this superstition[3].

THE MARA (QVÆLDRYTTERINDE).

The Mara (Eng. *mare*, in *nightmare*) belongs to the same family with the Vardögl, Draug[4], etc. In appearance she resembles a most beautiful woman, but in acts the most

[1] Toft and tomt are synonymous, and signify the space on which a messuage has stood.

[2] Arndt, iii. 15. [3] See vol. i. p. 93, and *note* [1]. [4] Ib. p. 113.

malignant Troll. She passes through locked doors, assails persons sleeping by setting herself across them, and tormenting them so that it is horrible. The person afflicted by such a nightly visit is said to be Mare-ridden, and is often nearly suffocated. She is not satisfied with tormenting persons, but will ride both sheep and horses. In the Thellemark she is called *Muro*, and there, as in other places, they have many methods of getting rid of her; one of the most effectual is to wrap a knife in a cloth, and, in a manner prescribed, let it turn three times round the body, while uttering certain rimes.

Like other supernatural beings, the Mara can enter by the smallest hole, but, like them, she must also make her exit by the way through which she entered, even though every door and window should be open (Thiele, ii. 282). Hence Mephistopheles, in answer to Faust's inquiry *why he did not depart through the window?* says—

's ist ein Gesetz der Teufel und Gespenster,
wo sie hereingeschlüpft, da müssen sie hinaus.

See also Holberg's 'Uden Hoved og Hale,' Act I. Sc. 4.

The Ynglingasaga, cxvi. has a story of a King Vanlandi in Upsala, who was trodden to death by a Mara. When his men held his head, she trod on and almost crushed his legs; and when they held his feet, she so pressed his head as to cause his death.

GHOSTS.

The belief that the souls of the departed find pleasure in revisiting the places where they have experienced joy or sorrow and pain, is universal among almost every people. Hence the current opinion, that the soul of a murdered person willingly hovers around the spot where his body is buried, and makes its appearance, for the purpose of calling forth vengeance on the murderer. The eye of superstition sees them sometimes as white spectres in the churchyard, where they stop horses, terrify people, and make a disturbance; sometimes as executed criminals, who in the moonlight wander round the place of execution, with their head under their arm. Sometimes they

pinch people while asleep both black and blue, and such marks are called ghost-spots (Dödningepletter), or ghost-pinches (Dödningeknib). Such spectres cannot find peace in the grave, in consequence of the crimes either of themselves or of others, before they are asked what it is they want; after which they do not appear again. Bullets, gunpowder, and weapons are wasted on them; but at the sight of a cross and from exorcisms they must retire. Under this head may be included the so-called *Udburrer* or *Udbore*, who in some districts cry like children in the woods, and entice people to them, and in other places, have their abode in steep mountains, and retired spots near the sea, and are supposed to derive their origin from murdered children.

The Danish word for *ghost* is Gjenganger, or Gjenfærd, answering exactly to the French *revenant*. The belief in ghosts was deeply impressed on the minds of the heathen Northmen; a belief closely connected with their ideas of the state after death. The soul, they believed, returned to the place whence it sprang, while the body and the grosser life bound to it passed to the abode of Hel or Death. Herewith was naturally combined the belief that the soul of the departed might, from its heavenly home, revisit the earth, there at night-time to unite itself in the grave-mound with the corporeal shadow released from Hel. Thus the dead could show themselves in the opened grave-mounds in the same form which they had in life. See Völsungakv. I. Str. 37, 38, in Edda Sæm.

In the Eyrbyggiasaga is a story of an ejectment of a whole troop of ghosts from a house by judicial process.

THE NÖK.

The Norwegian Nök (O. Nor. Nikr, Sw. Neck) generally has its abode in rivers and lakes, sometimes also in friths (Fiorde). It requires a human sacrifice every year; for which reason one person at least is annually missing in the vicinity of every river or water that is inhabited by a Nök. When any person is drowned the Nök is often heard to cry in a hollow, unearthly voice: "Sæt over!" (Cross over). The Nök can transform himself into all kinds of things. Sometimes he will appear like half a

boat in the water, at others like a half horse on the bank, sometimes like gold and other valuables. If a person touches any of these things, the Nök instantly gets power over him. He is particularly greedy after little children. He is, however, dangerous only after sunset. On approaching any water, it is not amiss to say: "Nyk! Nyk! Naal i Vatn! Jomfru Maria kastet Staal i Vatn! Du sæk, æk flyt!" ("Nyk! Nyk! needle in water! The Virgin Mary cast steel into water! Thou sink, I float!") This formula requires some explanation, which will be found hereafter in what is related of the Swedish Neck.

The Nök is known in many places under the name of the Söetrold (water-sprite), which is said to abide always in the water, and to have many heads. If persons are in danger of shipwreck, they must promise him a son or a daughter for their deliverance; for which he, on the other hand, bestows on them riches and good fortune as much as they desire. He frequently changes his form, and takes his name from the place where he has his abode. In one place in Norway, whenever it is stormy, or a tempest is gathering, he appears in the form of a large horse, plashing with his monstrous hoofs in the water, which he causes almost constantly to be in violent motion. In the same water, another being, called the Vigtrold, has its habitation, which shouts terrifically when any danger is at hand.

Although the Nök is a dangerous being, he nevertheless sometimes meets with his master. In the waterfall of Sund, as the story goes, there dwelt for a long time a Nök, who caused the loss of many persons, when they rowed up or down the fall. The priest, who apprehended danger from this Nök, took with him on his passage four stout men, whom he ordered to row with all their might up the fall. They made the attempt twice, but at each time glided back. In making the third attempt, it was observed that, at the upper part of the fall, the priest,

dashing his hand into the water, drew up a black creature resembling a little dog. He then ordered the men to row further up, at the same time placing the animal firmly between his feet, and keeping a constant silence. Having now reached the stone-mound at Tvet, he conjured the Nök into it. From that time no one has perished in the fall.

In Iceland, where the Nök is called *Hnikur*, he appears like a handsome grey horse, though with his hoofs turned backwards, and strives to tempt people to mount him, when he will gallop off with them into the water. Some efforts to tame him have been partially successful, and he has been made to work, though for a short time only.

In the Faroe islands the *Nikar* has his abode in fresh waters or lakes, where he will drag people down and drown them.

In Scotland the Nök is sometimes represented by Shellycoat, who is covered with sea-weed and muscle-shells; sometimes by the Kelpie who, at least in the Highlands, appears in a horse's shape. In the Orkneys he appears either as a little horse, or as a man under the name of Tangie[1]. In Shetland he is called Shoopiltee, and appears as a handsome little horse, tempting persons to mount him, when he runs with his rider into the sea. In the Scottish islands they make him an offering, in the shape of a cup of good beer[2].

Grimm (D. M. p. 479) interprets the name of Shellycoat by the German Schellenrock (Bell-coat), supposing him so named from his coat being hung with bells; and cites the instance of a *Puck*, who for thirty years served in the kitchen and stable of a Meklenburg monastery. He appeared always well-disposed, and only stipulated for *tunicam de diversis coloribus et tintinnabulis plenam.*

The Norwegian Nök and the Kelpie of Scotland are identical beings. When one of the Grahams of Morphie was building the old castle, he secured the assistance of the water-kelpie or river-horse, by the accredited means of throwing a pair of branks (a sort of yoke) over his head. When released from his labour, and about to return to the water, he said:—

> "Sair back and sair banes,
> Drivin the Laird o' Morphie's stanes!
> The Laird o' Morphie 'll never thrive
> As lang 's the kelpie is alive[3]!"

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[1] In Ben's Descript. of Orkney (1599) he is thus described: "Indutus est algis marinis toto corpore, similis est pullo equino convoluto pilis, membrum habet simile equino, et testiculos magnos." Hibbert, 504.

[2] See Hibbert, 5. 26.

[3] Chambers' Pop. Rh. p. 35.

THE GRIM, OR FOSSEGRIM.

Closely allied to the Nök is the musical Grim or Fossegrim of Norway, a being whose sojourn is by waterfalls and mill-works. He generally plays in still and dark evenings, to entice persons to him, and teach those to play on the violin or other stringed instrument, who, on a Thursday evening, offer to him, with averted face, a white kid, which is to be cast into a waterfall running northwards. If the offering is lean, the learner's progress will extend only to the tuning of the violin; but if it is fat, the Fossegrim will grasp the player's right hand, and move it backwards and forwards until the blood springs out at the end of every finger. The pupil is then fully instructed, and can play so incomparably that the very trees will dance and the waterfalls stop their course.

THE RORE-TROLD.

In the Rorevand in Nedenæs, a lake enclosed within steep mountains, and much exposed to squalls of wind, a Troll, called the Rore-trold, has his abode. He appears under various forms, sometimes as a horse, sometimes as a load of hay, sometimes as a huge serpent, and sometimes as a number of persons. In the winter, and when the ice is thickest, there may be seen, on one night, a long, broad chasm, with fragments of ice lying in it, all which is the work of the Rore-trold.

THE BRUNMÎGI.

Another somewhat noxious Troll is the Brunmîgi, who is supposed to dwell near and infest springs. His name (from Brunn, *fons*, and mîga, *mingere*) sufficiently indicates his nature.

THE QVÆRNKNURRE.

This being seems in many respects identical with the Fossegrim. In Gierrestad it was formerly the custom to

place a soft loaf, a cup of beer, or something of the kind, by the millstone, that the Qværnknurre might increase the flour in the sacks. For some time he took up his abode in Sandager waterfall, where a man had a mill. As often as the man began to grind corn the mill stopt. Knowing that it was the Qværnknurre that caused this annoyance, he took with him one evening, when he was about to grind, some pitch in a pot, under which he made a fire. As soon as he had set the mill in motion it stopt as usual. He then thrust downwards with a pole, in the hope of driving away the Qværnknurre, but in vain. At last he opened the door to see, when lo! there stood the Qværnknurre with extended jaws, and of such magnitude that while its lower lip rested on the threshold, its upper one touched the top of the doorway. It said to the man: "Hast thou ever seen such great gaping?" Instantly seizing the boiling pitch-pot, the man dashed it into his mouth, with the words: "Hast thou ever tasted such hot boiling?" With a howl the Qværnknurre vanished, and was never again seen.

A being nearly resembling the Qværnknurre is the Urisk of the Scottish Highlands, which is described as a rough hairy sprite that sets mills at work in the night, when there is nothing to grind. He is sent howling away by a panful of hot ashes thrown into his lap while he is sleeping [1].

THE FINNGALKN.

This monster is often named, though not accurately described in the later romantic Sagas. According to these it has a human head with enormous teeth, a beast's body and a large heavy tail, terrific claws and a sword in every claw [2].

[1] Keightley, F. M. p. 396, from the Quarterly Review, 1825.
[2] Keyser, p. 163. See Snorra-Edda, edit. Rask, p. 342.

GERTRUD'S BIRD.

In Norway the red-crested, black woodpecker is known under the name of Gertrud's Bird. Its origin is as follows: "When our Lord, accompanied by St. Peter, was wandering on earth, they came to a woman who was occupied in baking; her name was Gertrud, and on her head she wore a red hood. Weary and hungry from their long journeying, our Lord begged for a cake. She took a little dough and set it on to bake, and it grew so large that it filled the whole pan. Thinking it too much for alms, she took a smaller quantity of dough, and again began to bake, but this cake also swelled up to the same size as the first; she then took still less dough, and when the cake had become as large as the preceding ones, Gertrud said: 'You must go without alms, for all my bakings are too large for you.' Then was our Lord wroth, and said: 'Because thou givest me nothing, thou shalt for a punishment become a little bird, shalt seek thy dry food between the wood and the bark, and drink only when it rains.' Hardly were these words spoken, when the woman was transformed to the *Gertrud's bird*, and flew away through the kitchen chimney; and at this day she is seen with a red hood and black body, because she was blackened by the soot of the chimney. She constantly pecks the bark of trees for sustenance, and whistles against rain; for she always thirsts and hopes to drink [1]."

AASGAARDSREIA (WILD HUNT).

This band consists of spirits who have not done so much good as to deserve heaven, nor so much evil as to be sent to hell. It consists of drunkards, brawlers, singers of slanderous songs, crafty deceivers, and those that for the sake of lucre have perjured themselves. Their

[1] Asbjörnsen og Möe, No. 2. Grimm, D. M. p. 639.

punishment is to ride about till the end of the world. At the head of the troop rides Guro-Rysse or Reisa-Rova with her long tail, by which she is distinguished from the rest. After her follows a multitude of both sexes. If seen in front, they appear tall and comely, both riders and horses; but behind, nothing is to be seen but Guro's long tail. The horses, which are coal-black, and have eyes that glow in the dark like fire, are guided with red hot rods and iron reins, which, together with the screaming of the riders, cause such a terrific noise that it may be heard at a vast distance. They ride as easily over water as over land, their horses' hoofs scarcely touching the surface of the water. Wherever they cast a saddle on a roof, there a person must soon die; and where they understand there will be fighting and murder in a drinking bout, there they enter, and set themselves on the ledge above the door. They conduct themselves quietly as long as nothing is going forwards, but set up a horse-laugh and make a loud rattling with their iron rods, when the fighting is begun and murder committed. The troop rides about chiefly at Christmas, when the great drinking bouts are held. When a person hears the troop coming, he should get out of the way or fall down on his face, and appear to be asleep; for there are instances of men having been caught up by them, and either carried back to the place whence they were taken, or found half stupified at a distance from it. A good man who takes this precaution has nothing more to apprehend than that each of the troop will spit on him. When all are passed by, he must spit in his turn; otherwise he would receive injury therefrom.

This remarkable tradition, the title even of which points to heathenism, is known, at least by name, over the greater part of the diocese of Christiansand, but it is found most complete in the Upper Thellemark, where I myself have heard it; where it is called the Aaske-Rei or Asanerfœrd,

which cannot be seen but only heard. It devours the Fladbröd (thin cakes), butter, etc., that have been prepared for Christmas, unless they be crossed previously to being put away. In one district of Norway, if any one, on hearing the troop, does not throw himself down, his soul must accompany it, while his body remains lying. When the soul returns to the body, the latter is quite enfeebled, and remains so ever after. In some places this noisy troop is called Aaskereia, in others Hoskelreia. Sometimes they ride with a rushing noise through the air; sometimes they are to be met by night, on the roads, riding on black horses with glowing eyes. On Christmas eve, and the three nights of Christmas, they are the most riotous, and the countryman who has neglected the precaution of placing a bar before his horses, or a cross over his door, may be certain of finding them the next morning dripping wet and almost broken-winded; for the Hoskelreia will have used them, and they are not the people to treat them gently.

THE MERMAN (MARMENNILL) AND MERMAID (MARGYGR).

Sailors and fishermen, when the weather is calm, sometimes see Mermen and Mermaids rise from the bosom of the tranquil deep. The Mermen are of a dusky hue, with a long beard, black hair, and from the waist upwards resemble a man, but downwards are like a fish. The Mermaids are beautiful upwards, but downwards, like the Mermen, have a fish's form. Their children are called Marmæler. These are sometimes caught by fishermen, who take them home, that they may gain from them a knowledge of future events; for both they, as well as the Mermen and Mermaids, can see into futurity. It is now rare to hear a Mermaid speak or sing. Mariners are not pleased at the sight of them, as they forbode a storm.

It is dangerous to hurt them. A sailor once enticed a Mermaid so near, that she laid her hand on the gunwale of the vessel, which he struck off. For his barbarity he was overtaken by a storm, in which he nearly perished. St. Olaf, on one of his piratical expeditions, fell in with a Mermaid, who by her sweet song was wont to lull mariners to sleep, and then drag them down. If, in diving

under water, they turn towards a ship, it betokens misfortune; if they turn from the ship, it is a good sign[1].

Belief in Mermen and Mermaids is as old as it is general. According to Gervase of Tilbury, we had Mermaids in our seas, and they are mentioned in the Icelandic Sagas. See Dobeneck, i. pp. 38 *sqq.*, also for an account of the German Water-nix. In Ireland they are called *Merrows*, and legends are told of them similar to those of other countries.

THE SEA-SNAKE.

In fresh waters and rivers, as well as along the coasts of Norway, enormous snakes are said to exist, but varying with regard both to their appearance and magnitude. According to the general belief, they are brought forth on the land, and have their first abode in forests and mounds of stone, whence, when they grow large, they betake themselves to the great lakes or inland seas, or to the ocean, where they grow to a tremendous size. They seldom make their appearance, and when they do, are regarded as forerunners of important events. In most of the lakes and rivers of any considerable magnitude, these monsters have, in former times, on one or other extraordinary occasion, been seen to rise from the water's depth. In the fresh waters none have been seen within the memory of man, but they sometimes, when there is a dead calm, appear in the fiords or firths. Some time after the Black Death[2] there came, according to tradition, two large snakes from the Foksöe, by the town down to the 'loug' (bath), where one, it is said, is still to be found; but the other attempted, about two hundred years since, to go down to the river's mouth, where it perished in the fall and was driven across in the vicinity of Drontheim, where it became putrid, and emitted such a stench that no one could approach the place.

[1] Keyser, p. 162.

[2] A.D. 1350. Two-thirds of the people of Norway are said to have perished. It visited England two years earlier.

In the Lundevand, on Lister, there is a Sea-Snake that appears only before a king's death or some great revolution. Some assert that they have seen it.

In Bollarnvatn also, in Bahuus [1], there was formerly a Sea-Snake, whose body was as thick as a calf's of a year old, and whose tail was about six ells in length. It destroyed the fish, and had its abode in a little isle called Svanviksöe. It never showed itself, except when some calamity was at hand. But of all the snakes inhabiting the waters of the North, none are so celebrated as those that were and are to be found in Miös. In an old writing [2], we are told of a tremendous snake, that seemed to approach from the island, and to go from thence to the 'King's land,' but instantly vanished. In like manner, many large snakes appeared day after day in Miös, which twisted themselves into a variety of curves, and cast the water to a considerable height. At length the first-mentioned enormous snake made its appearance a second time, and darted with rapidity up on a rock. Its eyes were as large as the bottom of a barrel, and it had a long mane that hung far down its neck. As it could not get off the rock, but lay and beat its head against it, one of the bishop's servants, who was a daring fellow, took a steel bow, and shot so many arrows into its eye, that the water round about was coloured green from the outflowing humour. This snake, which displayed a variety of colours, was appalling to look upon. It died of the wounds it had received, and sent forth such a stench, that the people thereabouts, by the bishop's order, united for the purpose of burning it, which was done. Its skeleton lay for many years on the shore. A grown-up youth could hardly carry the smallest portion of its backbone. It is also said that there is a Sea-Snake,

[1] This tradition belongs strictly to those of Sweden, but is left here, in order not to divide the several accounts of the Sea-Snake.

[2] Beskrivelse over Hammer.

which winds itself round the great bell from Hammer, which was sunk during the seven years' war in the Akersvig, and when the water is clear may still be discerned. All attempts to raise it have been in vain, though it was once lifted to the water's surface.

That this Miös snake was not a thing to be played with, will appear from an account of the year 1656, given in Pontoppidan's Natural History of Norway, 2, 65. Such a water-snake made a land trip from Miös to Spirillen, and is probably the same with the one that was wont to appear in that lake against evil and perilous times. "It was in appearance like a huge mast, whatever stood in its way it overthrew, even trees and huts. With its loud hissing and horrid roaring it terrified all the people round about."

That in calm weather such enormous Sea-Snakes sometimes appear on the coast of Norway, can hardly be denied, as credible persons, even in our own time, declare that they have seen them [1]; to whose testimony may be added that of Hibbert, who says: "The existence of the Sea-Snake, a monster fifty-five feet long, is placed beyond a doubt by the animal, that was thrown on shore in Orkney, the vertebræ of which are to be seen in the Edinburgh Museum [2]."

The writer, who among us has most amply treated of the Sea-Snake, is Eric Pontoppidan, in his Natural History of Norway, in which two representations of Sea-Snakes are given. According to his testimony, founded on the accounts of Bergen and Nordland mariners, as well as of other eye-witnesses, these monsters live in the depths of the ocean, except in July and August, when in calm weather they come up to the surface; but sink again the

[1] Compare the Vestlandske Tidende No. 22, and Sorenskriver Blom's, also Bishop Neumann's paa troværdige Folks Beretninger grundede Vidnesbyrd, Budstikken 6te Aargang 159 and 578.

[2] Description of Shetland, p. 565.

moment the wind begins to ruffle the watery mirror. According to the testimony of Commander de Ferrys in 1746, given before a court, "the Sea-Snake seen by him in the vicinity of Molda, had a head resembling in shape that of a horse, which it held about an ell above the water, of a greyish hue, the snout quite black, very large black eyes, and a long white mane, which hung from its neck into the sea. Seven or eight coils of its body, which was very thick, were also seen: according to conjecture, there was a fathom between the coils [1]." According to the testimony of the priest Tuchsen of Heröe, and of some neighbouring priests, these Sea-Snakes were as thick as a double hogshead (Oxehoved), had large nostrils and blue eyes, which at a distance resembled a couple of bright pewter plates. On the neck there was a mane, which from afar appeared like sea-weed.

DRAGONS.

Traditions of Dragons that fly through the air by night and spit forth fire, are very general, and holes in the earth and the mountains are yet shown over all the country, whence they have been seen issuing like a glowing fire, when war or other public calamity was at hand. When they return to their habitations,—where they brood over vast treasures and precious things, which, according to some traditions, they have collected in the bottom of the sea—the sound may be heard of the great iron doors, which close after them. As they are fierce and spit pernicious fire, it is dangerous to contend with them. Under Agers church, which stands on four golden pillars, a dragon broods over immense riches. It has been seen, even within the memory of persons living, or a short time before the last war, issuing from a hole near the church. From the

[1] Pontoppidan, 2, 321.

Dragon's Hole on Storöe in Aadal, from the Dragon's Hill on Rasvog, and numerous other places, firedrakes with long tails were to be seen issuing in former times, and sometimes even in our days. That they are not invincible appears from an old tradition, which tells of a priest, named Anders Madsen, who is said to have lived about 1631, that shot a dragon which brooded over silver in the so-called Dragon Mount near the Tvedevand.

The important part played by dragons, firedrakes and the like in the old songs, legends and romances, where the killing of a dragon forms one of a hero's earliest proofs of valour, has probably given birth to the innumerable traditions concerning these monsters; an accidental electric fire, a fire-ball or the like, being enough to keep the belief alive.

THE SEVERED HAND[1].

There was a miller whose mill was burnt down on two successive Whitsun-eves. In the third year, just before Whitsuntide, he had a tailor in his house to make holyday clothes.

"I wonder how it will go with the mill this time; whether it will be burnt again to-night," said the miller.

"You need not fear that," said the tailor, "give me the key, and I will keep watch in it."

This seemed to the miller both good and highly acceptable; and when it drew towards evening the tailor got the key and went to the mill, which was still empty, having but just been rebuilt. So placing himself in the middle of the floor, he chalked round him a large circle, on the outside of which he wrote the Paternoster; and thus fortified, would not have feared if the arch-enemy himself had made his appearance. In the dead of the night the door suddenly flew open, and there came in such a multitude of black cats, that the place literally swarmed. But a short time had elapsed when they set a large earthen

[1] Asbjörnsen, Norske Huldreeventyr, i. pp. 11–14.

pot in the chimney, and lighted a fire under it, so that it began frying and hissing in the pot as if it were full of boiling pitch and tar.

"Oho," thought the tailor, "is that what you are after?" And scarcely had he given utterance to the thought when one of the cats put its paw behind the pot and tried to upset it.

"Whisht cat, you'll burn yourself!" cried the tailor.

"Whisht cat, you'll burn yourself! the tailor says," said the cat to the other cats, and all ran from the chimney, and began hopping and dancing round the circle; but in the meanwhile the cat again sneaked to the chimney and endeavoured to upset the pot.

"Whisht cat, you'll burn yourself!" cried the tailor, and drove it from the chimney.

"Whisht cat, you'll burn yourself, the tailor says," said the cat to the other cats, and all began dancing and hopping again, but in a moment the same cat was away trying a third time to overturn the pot.

"Whisht cat, you'll burn yourself!" cried the tailor in a rage, and so terrified them that they tumbled one over another, and then began to jump and dance as before.

They then formed a circle without the tailor's circle, and began dancing round it with an ever-increasing velocity, till at length it seemed to the tailor that everything was whirling round before him. All this while the cats were staring at him with their large, fierce eyes, as if they would swallow him.

While they were in the thick of it, the cat that had tried to upset the pot, put her paw within the circle, as if she felt inclined to seize hold of the tailor, but who seeing her design, drew out his knife and stood on his guard. After a few moments the cat again put her paw within the ring, when the tailor in one instant chopped it off; and all the cats took to their heels, screaming and howling, as speedily

as they could, and left the tailor in quiet possession of the field.

The tailor then lay down in the circle till long after the sun had been shining in upon him. He then rose, locked the mill-door and proceeded to the miller's house.

When he entered the room the miller and his wife were still in bed, it being Whit-sunday.

"Good morning," said the tailor, giving the miller his hand. "Good morning," said the miller in return, and was both glad and surprised to see the tailor again.

"Good morning, mother," said he, holding out his hand to the miller's wife.

"Good morning," said she, but appeared pale and sorrowful, and kept her hand under the bed-clothes, but at last offered him her left hand. The tailor now saw how matters stood; but what afterwards took place is not said.

The North-German story, Die Katzenmühle, closely resembles the above, but is much simpler. The Norwegian one is probably embellished by the author, from whose work it is extracted.

OF ST. OLAF.

St. Olaf was the Norwegian people's hero, and yet lives in their remembrance, while few only and imperfect traditions are occasionally to be met with of his equally valiant predecessors and successors. Let us, therefore, consider this man, in order more easily to comprehend the causes of his great celebrity.

Olaf was born in 995; his father, Harald Grænske, was of the race of Harald Hárfager, and his mother, Ásta, the daughter of Gudbrand, from the Uplands. In his third year he was baptized, King Olaf Tryggvason standing godfather to him. In his youth he sailed on piratical expeditions, in which he acquired great experience and fitness for warfare. Supported by powerful relations and friends, as well as by his own sagacity and military skill, he gained

possession of his paternal kingdom, over which he reigned for fifteen years with great vigour and reputation. His exertions were chiefly directed to the complete establishment of the Christian faith in Norway, which, after the death of Olaf Tryggvason, had greatly declined; but the violence with which he proceeded, together with his ambition and severity, rendered him so hateful, that he found it advisable to flee from the country to Gardarike[1], from his discontented subjects, who were, moreover, instigated and supported by the ambitious Dano-English king, Cnut the Great. Olaf, who in the school of adversity had begun to act the saint, was on the eve of starting for Jerusalem, when Olaf Tryggvason, in a dream, bade him return to Norway. He obeyed the behest and marched with an army into the country, where, in an obstinate battle at Stiklastad in Værdal, he was defeated and slain by his revolted subjects, on the 29th July 1030.

Shortly after the death of Olaf, the fame of his sanctity and the miracles said to have attended his corpse formed a topic of conversation among the people, who found them the more credible, as they were highly dissatisfied with what they had got in exchange for him. Olaf's body, which had been buried in a sand-bank at Stiklastad, was taken up, and being found, after the expiration of a year, unchanged, with the hair and nails grown, Grimkell, Olaf's court-bishop, declared him a holy person, and the commonalty thereupon determined that Olaf was a true saint. His body was by his son, King Magnus the Good, laid in a costly shrine, and placed by the high altar in the church of St. Clement at Nidaros (Drontheim), where, as well as afterwards in the magnificent Christchurch (the present cathedral), it is said to have wrought numerous miracles. St. Olaf's festival, the 29th July, was by law commanded to be celebrated throughout the country as the chief solemnity, and churches

[1] Russia, in its then restricted signification.

to his honour were erected not only in Norway, but in Denmark, Sweden, Russia, England, and even by his countrymen at Constantinople. Pilgrims journeyed in crowds to St. Olaf's shrine, and legends of cripples who had there recovered the use of their limbs, and of other miracles soon became numberless.

St. Olaf's shrine of silver, inlaid with gold and precious stones, a single one of which cost Archbishop Walkendorf twenty lasts of butter[1], was on solemn occasions, such as the Saint's yearly festival, or the election of a king, borne in procession by sixty men, and was an abundant source of revenue to the clergy and the cathedral. The last archbishop, Olaf Engelbretson, carried it with him to his strong castle of Steinviksholm, where, after his flight, it fell into the hands of the Danish commander, Christopher Hvitfeld, who sent St. Olaf's shrine of silver gilt, weighing about 3200 ounces, together with another silver shrine, in which the Saint's shirts were preserved, and many other valuables, to the Danish treasury.

When the Swedes in 1564 had taken possession of Drontheim, they found nothing remaining of St. Olaf's treasures, except his helmet, spurs, and the wooden chest that had contained his body[2]. The helmet and spurs they took with them to Sweden, where they are still preserved in the church of St. Nicholas at Stockholm; but the chest they left behind in a church, after having drawn out the silver nails, which had been left by the Danes. After the expulsion of the Swedes, St. Olaf's body and chest were, with great solemnity, carried back to the cathedral, where, a contemporary bears witness, that the body was found entire in a grave of masonry in 1567, and "his

[1] Equal to about forty tons.

[2] This was, without doubt, one of the cases in which his silver shrine was preserved. What became of his armour, battle-axe, spear, and the banner given him by an angel, while he slept on the place where he was martyred, is not known.

blood is seen to this day in a barn, and can never be washed out by water or human hands." In the following year St. Olaf's body was by a royal ordinance covered with earth.

St. Olaf's sanctity is no more thought of, even his last resting-place is forgotten, but his name still lives, as is proved by the numerous traditions still fresh in the memory of the Norwegian people. Throughout the land are to be found traces of St. Olaf's deeds and miraculous power. Fountains sprang forth when he thirsted, and acquired salutary virtue when he drank; rocks were rent at his bidding, and sounds (sunde) were formed at his nod; churches were raised, and Trolls found in St. Olaf a foe as formidable as they had formerly had in the mighty Thor, whose red beard even was inherited by St. Olaf. In many places Trolls are still shown, who at St. Olaf's command were turned into stone.

Out of Norway also St. Olaf lived long in popular tradition. In Denmark and in Sweden are many places where traditions are yet current of St. Olaf and the Trolls he turned into stone. Thus, as he was one day riding by Dalby church in Värmeland, he was addressed by a Troll-wife in these words:—

"Kong Olaf med dit pipuga Skägg[1]! Du seglar för när min Badstuguväg."

King Olaf with thy pointed beard! Thou sailest too near my bath-room wall.

To which he answered:—

"Du Tröll med din Rack och Ten
Skal bli i Sten,
Och aldrig mer göra Skeppare Men."

Thou Troll-wife with thy rock and wheel
Shall turn to stone,
And never more do shipman harm.

In the Shetland isles, we learn from Hibbert, the in-

[1] The same probably as Sw. Pipskägg (Grimm, D. M. p. 517), the little pointed beard on the under lip.

habitants, as late as the eighteenth century, maintained that they had their ancient, but now lost, law-book from 'St. Olla,' of whom they relate wonderful things in their songs, which they call 'Vissacks.' A Faröe tradition ascribes it to St. Olaf, that they have now no woods on the islands. St. Olaf having inquired of some of the inhabitants whether they had any woods at home, they suspecting that he made the inquiry with the view to taxing them, answered in the negative. "Be it so," said the king, and at the same time the Faröe woods sank into the earth.

If it be asked what can be the origin of many of these wondrous traditions, we answer, that it must be sought for in the same ignorance of nature and its effects, together with the desire of finding a reason for everything that seems uncommon, which has given birth to so many traditions of supernatural beings. What heathenism attributed to the gods of Valhall and to the mighty Thor, the cunning Catholic ecclesiastics, with their earliest converts, no doubt transferred to the powerful suppresser of the Asa-faith, St. Olaf, whose axe supplanted Thor's Miölnir, and whose steed, renowned in tradition, the goats of the Thunder-god[1]. Olaf's own renown, the tales of pious pilgrims and monkish legends have gradually combined to

[1] The numerous representations, which in the days of Catholicism were no doubt to be found in many of the churches dedicated to St. Olaf, are now for the most part destroyed; but from the notices which we have of them, the hero was generally represented with a battle-axe in his hand, and treading on a Troll or a dragon. In Ladvig church there is a remarkable processional banner, on which is the figure of St. Olaf, in complete armour, treading on a dragon. In St. Mary's church at Lübeck I have seen an old, but very good painting, the principal figure in which is St. Olaf completely armed, with his battle-axe in his hand and a royal mantle over his shoulders. With one foot he is treading on a dragon, but which has a human head. In the Kollmann chapel, in the same church, there is likewise an ancient picture of 'St. Olaus.' Even in London there are two or three churches dedicated to St. Olave.

make of St. Olaf a hero, whom the superstitious and ignorant multitude believed capable of performing the most impossible things.

OF ST. OLAF AND THE FIRST CHURCH IN NORWAY.

In Norrland there is the following tradition respecting the first church erected in Norway[1]:—

As St. Olaf was one day wandering among the woods and mountains, deeply meditating how, without laying heavy burthens on his people, he could accomplish the construction of a church he had planned in his mind, of such magnitude that its like should hardly be found, he met a man of gigantic size, who asked him what he was pondering over. "I may well be pondering," answered the king, "having made a vow to build a church for magnitude and magnificence without its like in the whole world." The Troll thereupon undertook by a certain fixed time to complete such a structure, but only on condition that, if the work should be finished at the time appointed, St. Olaf would engage to give him, in remuneration for his labour, the sun and moon, or St. Olaf himself. The king agreed to the condition, but fancied he could form such a vast plan for the edifice, that the giant would find it impossible to finish the work by the time agreed on. The church was to be so spacious that seven priests might preach in it at the same time without hearing or disturbing one another. The pillars and ornaments, both within and without, were to be of the hardest flint; besides which many other and equally difficult conditions were included in the bargain. But within a much shorter time than the period agreed on, St. Olaf saw the church finished, with the exception of the spire, which was still to be erected. Seeing this the Saint went out

[1] For other versions of this story, see Danish Traditions and Swedish Traditions.

again among the woods and mountains, in deep tribulation, thinking of his unfortunate engagement; when suddenly he heard a child crying in the mountain, and a giantess comforting it with the following song:—

"Vys! vyss! sonen min!	Hush! hush! my son!
I morgon kommer Vind och Väder, fader din,	To-morrow comes Wind and Tempest, thy father,
Och bar med sig Sol och Måne,	And has with him sun and moon,
Eller sjelfver Sanct Olof."	Or St. Olaf himself.

Now the king was overjoyed, because Trolls, as we are told, always lose their power when a Christian man calls them by their name. On his return he saw the giant standing on the top of the tower, in the act of placing the spire, and called to him:—

"Vind och Väder,	Wind and Tempest,
Du har satt spiran sneder!"	Thou hast set the spire awry!

From the summit of the church the Troll now fell with a terrific smash, and was shivered in fragments, all which were mere flints. According to another version the giant's name was Slätt, and St. Olaf cried out:—

"Slätt! sätt spiran rätt!"	Slätt! set the spire straight!

According to another, he is called Bläster, and St. Olaf calls to him:—

"Bläster! sätt spiran väster!"	Blaster! set the spire westward!

The same tradition is also current in Norway itself, where the giant is called Skalle, and the magnificent cathedral of Nidaros (Drontheim) is the church erected by him[1]. A similar tradition respecting the name of the Troll is found also in Germany[2].

ST. OLAF AT VAALER.

When travelling over the country, for the purpose of introducing the Christian faith, St. Olaf came to a place

[1] Afzelius, iii. 97, 98; Grimm, D. M. pp. 515, 516.
[2] Grimm, K. and H. M. No. 55.

on the east bank of the Glommen, which, together with its church and the whole parish, acquired the name of Vaaler in the following manner:—In the above-named place, St. Olaf held an assize, at which, after some hesitation, it was decided that the God whom the king worshiped should also be worshiped by the people, and that Odin's religion should give place to that of Christ. It was further decided, on the king's proposal, that a church should be erected there, as at other places, where the new faith had been adopted. With respect, however, to the spot where it should be built, a great difference of opinion arose; whereupon, as the tradition informs us, St. Olaf bent his bow, sent forth an arrow, and declared that on the spot where it fell the church should stand. The king was standing at the time by the fountain that still bears the name of St. Olaf's, and the arrow fell in a *Vaal*[1], where a wooden church was afterwards built, which, together with the house and parish, was by St. Olaf named Vaaler. This church, at which the sick and dying were wont to make offerings, existed till the year 1805, when a new one was erected, in the vestment-chest of which there is an elaborate iron wire clasp, called St. Olaf's clasp, which, according to tradition, was placed in the old church by the king himself, and is said to have belonged to the halter of his horse. This horse the king was accustomed to water in the crystal spring, which is never dry in summer nor frozen in winter, and also bears St. Olaf's name. Miraculous powers were formerly ascribed to it. The sick placed money or anything of silver in it, for the recovery of their health; and great misfortune was supposed to await the person who should make free with these sacred deposits. Only a few years ago it was customary for the people, on the first day of every celebration, to strive who

[1] A Vaal is a quantity of trunks and roots of trees, piled in a heap for fuel.

should first arrive at the fountain, and it was regarded as something to boast of by him who was the first to water his horse at St. Olaf's well.

ST. OLAF AT RINGERIGE.

When St. Olaf was journeying from place to place, for the purpose of introducing the Christian faith and erecting churches in the place of the heathen temples, he found much opposition and hindrance not only from his refractory pagan subjects, but also from the numerous Trolls, Jutuls and Giantesses inhabiting the mountains round about. The Trolls could not endure St. Olaf, partly because, by using the sign of the cross, he did them much harm, and partly because he founded so many churches, the sound of whose bells disturbed their quiet. But notwithstanding their frequent efforts, they could effect nothing against the holy king, who, on the other hand, turned them at once to stone. Such petrified Trolls are still to be seen in all parts of the country. Thus, when St. Olaf was on one of his progresses, a fierce giantess suddenly sprang from a steep rock, crying aloud :—

"St. Olaf med det brede skjæg!	St. Olaf with the broad beard!
Du rider saa nær min Kjelder-væg!"	Thou ridest so near my cellar-wall!

St. Olaf instantly answered :—

"Stat du der i Stok og Steen,	Stand thou there in stock and stone,
Til jeg kommer her tilbars igjen."	Till I come hither back again.

The petrified giantess is yet to be seen there.

When St. Olaf came to Steen, where his mother at that time dwelt, he resolved on building a church there. With this resolution a giantess (gyvri) that lived in the mountain (which is two thousand feet high, and after her was called Gyrihauge) was highly displeased; and, although

she might, from the above-mentioned example, have known that St. Olaf was not a person to be trifled with, she determined to try her strength, and challenged him to a competition. "Before thou art ready with thy church," said she, "I shall have laid a stone bridge across Steen's fiord." Olaf accepted the challenge, and before she was half ready with her bridge, the sweet tones of the bells were heard from St. Olaf's already finished church. In her rage the Troll hurled the stones, which she had destined for the completion of the bridge, from Gyrihauge, straight across the fiord, at the church; but as none of them hit the mark, she was so exasperated that she tore off one of her legs and cast it at the church-tower. Some say that it carried the tower along with it, others that she aimed too high. But be that as it may, the leg sank down in a swamp behind the church, where it causes a foul stench even to this day. The swamp is still called by the country folk Giögraput, and the stones which she cast at the church were not long since to be seen in the neighbouring fields. The bridge begun by the giantess is now completed, and at Steen are still to be seen the ruins of St. Olaf's church, which deserve to be preserved more carefully than they now are. Formerly service was performed on every St. John's day, but about a hundred and fifty years ago the building was struck by lightning.

AXEL THORDSEN AND FAIR VALDBORG.

In the land of Norway there lived in former days a maiden so fair, that she was universally denominated the Fair Valdborg. Her father, Sir Immer, died in her tender infancy, and her mother, the Lady Julli, rested also in the dark earth before her daughter was grown up. Being of noble race she had powerful relatives all over the country, but the choicest of them all was Axel Thordsen, who chose her for his bride, while she was yet a child, and was be-

trothed to her, previous to his departure from the country to visit foreign courts, among which he took service under the emperor Henry.

His young bride was, in the meanwhile, placed in a cloister, that she might learn to sew, and there she remained for eleven years, when Queen Malfred received the fair maiden into her court, where she was held in high honour; for Malfred and the Lady Julli had been intimate acquaintances and often played at tables together. Axel was, in the mean time, beginning to feel a longing after his betrothed, and having been informed by a pilgrim of Valdborg's race, that she was the most beauteous maiden in the whole land, and that her powerful kindred had destined her for the king's son, Hagen, he obtained leave of absence from the emperor, and hastened back to his native country. Thirty attendants followed him, but when he reached his mother's mansion, he rode alone. At the gate he was met by his fair sister, the Lady Helfred, who advised him to disguise himself as a messenger, at the same time giving him a letter to Valdborg, whom he found, attending the queen, just coming from vespers. In the letter, which was filled with expressions of love, lay five gold rings, on which roses and lilies were embossed. On reading the letter, she plighted to him her faith anew, and adhered to her oath, although eleven knights made love to her, besides Hagen, the king's son, who was the twelfth. The young prince was sunk in despair and weary in spirit, when fair Valdborg would not be moved, and his mother, Queen Malfred, answered his complaint with: "By force thou canst not gain her." He nevertheless recovered hope, when he by chance met his confessor, the black friar Knud, who gave him the unexpected consolation, that Axel could not be united to Valdborg, because they were cousins german, and one woman had held them both over the font.

Hagen now addressed himself to Valdborg's three maternal uncles, who were jarls of high degree, and of them demanded her in marriage. Joyfully they gave their consent, but Valdborg said: "Axel is my dearest friend, I will never deceive him." Hagen then caused letters to be written and the archbishop summoned, together with seventy ecclesiastics, and declared that the two lovers should be cited before the archbishop.

With beating hearts the loving pair attended before the archbishop in St. Mary's church, where the black friar Knud stept forth, and with the pedigree in hand, showed that they could not be joined in wedlock, as they were cousins on the mother's side, and were besides godchildren of the same sponsor. They then went up to the altar, where a handkerchief was delivered to them, which was then cut in two between them, and a part retained by each. Thus were they parted for ever. The gold ring was then taken off Valdborg's finger and the bracelet from her arm, both of which were returned to Axel, who casting them on the altar, made a present of them to St. Olaf, at the same time swearing, that for the remainder of his life he would be the friend of Valdborg.

At this oath Hagen waxed wroth, and stepping forth swore, that Axel should on the following day make oath on sword and holy writ, that Valdborg was a virgin for him. Not only did the two lovers swear on the mass-book, but eleven jarls of the same race, with gilded swords and yellow locks, attended to swear with the fair maiden, with whom Hagen offered to share his throne whenever he became king; but she declared to the sorrowful Axel that she would never forget him, but would pass her days in solitude.

Thus stood matters for a considerable time. Axel and his beloved never entered into any amusements and never were seen to laugh. At length a war broke out, and

Hagen, who had now become king, summoned all his men to the field. He made Axel his general, and the bold knight, in whose shield of white and azure stood two red hearts, was ever at hand wherever his country's honour or his own required him. The conflict was obstinate. Axel slew King Amund's sons and many of the nobles of Upland. But King Hagen fell, mortally wounded, from his horse, requesting, at his last moments, Axel to avenge his death, to receive the kingdom of Norway, and take to wife the beloved of them both. Axel now again rushed into the thickest of the fight, slaughtering the enemy until his sword brake, and he had received seven mortal wounds. His last words were of his betrothed.

Valdborg divided all she possessed of value among her relations, and retired to the convent of St. Mary, where she was consecrated a nun by Archbishop Aage.

The foregoing notice of the story of Axel and Valdborg is abridged from the beautiful old Danish ballad of 'Axel Thordsen og Skjön Valdborg,' of which we know neither the name of its author nor the time of its composition. It is printed in the Udvalgte Danske Viser (Bd. iii. pp. 257 *sqq.*), and a German translation by W. C. Grimm is given in his 'Altdänische Heldenlieder,' pp. 357 *sqq.* It has been dramatized by Oehlenschlæger.

If the *ballad* has any historic worth beyond the circumstance that it affords an accurate picture of Norwegian costume in the middle age, and that in it may be seen, as in a mirror, the spirit and manners of the time, it seems most probable that its scene was in Romsdal and the neighbouring Söndmör. At the mansion of Houe in Söndmör, tradition tells of a battle fought there, in which both Axel Thordsen and the king's son, Hagen, were slain; and on the little isle of Gidske, by the church, there is a marble slab, shaped like a coffin lid, about six feet long and in the widest part scarcely an ell broad, on which are some illegible runic characters, which has always been known as Fair Valdborg's grave. On the other side of the quire, tradition further says, Axel Thordsen lies buried, but without a memorial. By each grave an ash was planted, both of which grew to an equal height, and when they had risen above the roof of the church, they inclined towards each other, and entwined their boughs together. Axel's tree yet stands flourishing, but Valdborg's is dead.

THE SIGNE-KJÆRRING, OR WITCH.

To ascertain under what disease a sickly child was labouring, recourse was—and, perhaps, is—had to a *signe-kjærring*[1], who employed for that purpose the process of *melting* or *casting*. This was done by melting lead taken from church windows after sunset, into water drawn from a stream running from the north. Over the vessel containing the water there was laid a barley cake, having in it a hole made with a darning needle, through which the molten lead was slowly poured into the water. This operation was usually performed in the case of rickets, in order to discover under which of the nine species of that disease—for such was the number of its varieties—the child was suffering. According to the form assumed by the lead in the water, the species was determined; if, for instance, it resembled a man with two large horns, it was the troldsvek (troll-rickets); if a mermaid, the vassvek (water-rickets).

While pouring the lead the sorceress muttered the following spell:—

I charm for guile, and I charm for rickets;
I charm it hence, and I charm it away;
I charm it out, and I charm it in;
I charm in weather, and I charm in wind;
I charm in the south, and I charm in the east;
I charm in the north, and I charm in the west;
I charm in the earth, and I charm in water;
I charm in the mountain, I charm in the sand;
I charm it down in an alder-root;
I charm it into a colt's foot;
I charm it into the fire of hell;
I charm it into a north-running stream;
There shall it eat, and there shall consume,
Till harm for the babe there shall be none[2].

[1] From at signe, i. e. *to exorcise*, and Kjærring (Nor. for Kjærling) *an old crone*; an undoubted descendant of the Vala of the heathen times.

[2] Asbjörnsen, Huldreeventyr, ii. pp. 158 *sqq*.

SCANDINAVIAN POPULAR TRADITIONS.

II.

SWEDISH TRADITIONS[1].

CHRISTMAS OR YULE PASTIMES.

Many Christmas customs and pastimes derive their origin from the sacrifices, which, in the days of heathenism, were appointed, in order to render the gods propitious. The sacrifices consecrated to Odin, which sometimes consisted of human beings, were celebrated with games and dancing. In Gothland, where most memorials of Odin are to be met with, a game still exists in some places, which represents such a sacrificial dance. It is performed, amid many nimble springs and changes of motion, by young men disguised, with their faces blackened or coloured. One of these represents the victim, everything required for the sacrifice is brought forth, which is apparently carried into effect to the sound of music or of song. Sometimes the person selected as the victim sits clad in skin on a stool, holding a wisp of straw in his mouth, which, cut sharp at the ends and standing out from his ears, is intended to resemble a

[1] From Afzelius, Svenska Folkets Sago-Häfder, unless otherwise expressed.

swine's bristles; he is thus supposed to represent the sacrifice made at Yule to Frey, and which consisted of a hog. In many places a loaf or cake is baked, which is called the Yule-hog (Julgalt), and is kept till the spring, when it is given to the cattle with which the labours of spring are to be executed; all in commemoration of the pagan sacrifices at midwinter or Yule for a good year. Even the name of Yule (O. Nor. Jol, Dan. Sw. Jul) is derived from the circular motion of the sun [1]; the first half-year *till* Yule with decreasing days, the second *from* Yule with increasing days; whence the time when both these halves meet is called the 'Jula-môt.' This was the ancient new year: it began with the longest night of winter, which was called the *Modernatt* (Mother night). The new year's wish of old was, 'a good Jula-môt.'

The hog of propitiation (sônargöltr) offered to Frey was a solemn sacrifice in the North, and in Sweden, down to modern times, the custom has been preserved of baking, on every Christmas eve, a loaf or cake in the form of a hog. Verelius, in his remarks on the Hervararsaga (p. 139) relates that the Swedish peasants dry the baked Yule-hog, and preserve it till the spring; then having pounded a part of it in the vessel out of which the seed is to be scattered, they give it mixed with barley to the plough-horses, leaving the other part to be eaten by the servants that hold the plough, in the hope of having a plentiful harvest [2].

MODERN TRADITIONS OF ODIN.

In Gothland, and particularly in Småland, many traditions and stories of Odin the Old still live in the mouths of the people. In Bleking it was formerly the custom to leave a sheaf on the field for Odin's horses. In Kråktorps gärd in Småland, a barrow was opened about a century ago, in which Odin was said to have been buried, and which, after the introduction of Christianity, was called Helvetesbacke (Hell's mount). In it was found a vault, from which when opened there burst forth a wondrous

[1] From O. Nor. hjol, Dan. Sw. hjul (wheel). See Grimm, D. M. p. 664.
[2] Ib. pp. 45, 1188.

fire, like a flash of lightning. A coffin of flints also and a lamp were found at the same time. Of a priest, named Peter Dagson, who dwelt near Troienborg, it is related, that when the rye he had sown there sprang up, Odin came riding from the hills every evening, of stature so lofty that he towered above the buildings in the farm-yard, and with spear in hand. Stopping before the entrance, he hindered every one, during the whole night, from going in or out. And this took place every night until the rye was cut.

A story is also current of a golden ship, which is said to be sunk in Runemad, near the Nyckelberg, in which, according to the tradition, Odin fetched the slain from the battle of Brávalla to Valhall. Kettils-ås, it is said, derives its name from one Kettil Runske, who stole Odin's runic staves (runekaflar), with which he bound his dogs and bull, and at length even the mermaid herself, who came to Odin's help. Many such traditions have been and may still be found in those parts; all of which, it may well be conceived, are not regarded as articles of faith; it is, nevertheless, a pleasure for the countryman, when, walking over his fields, he comes to a mount, a water, a pile of stones, to know what old traditions were current concerning them, and have given names to villages and dwellings.

It is worthy of remark that one of our (Swedish) handsomest birds of passage, the black heron (Ardea nigra, Linn.) was in ancient times called Odin's swallow.

MODERN TRADITIONS OF THOR.

Thor, as well as Odin the Old, came to the North with some immigration, which in remote times took place from Asia and Asgard. Here he had to contend with the land's earliest inhabitants, who from their dwelling in mountain-caverns and dens, as well as from their gigantic stature and ferocity, were called Jättar (Giants), Trolls and Bergsboar (mountain-dwellers). Hence have all the traditions

about giants and the like their origin. Those smooth, wedge-shaped stones, which are sometimes found in the earth, are called Thorwiggar, i. e. Thor's wedges: these, it is said, have been hurled by Thor at some Troll. In many places where the meadows border on the mountains, stories were once rife of the terror felt by the Trolls when it thundered, and how they then, in various shapes, though most frequently as large balls or clews, would come rolling down the mountain, seeking shelter among the mowers who, well aware of their danger, always held them back with their sithes; on which occasions it has often happened that the thunder has struck and shivered the sithe, when the Troll with a piteous piping sound would again return to the mountain.

Aërolites are found in many places and are memorials of Thor. Although not always of great magnitude, they are, nevertheless, so heavy that there is now scarcely any man who can lift them. These, it is said, Thor handled like playthings. Of the aërolite at Linneryd in Smäland it is related, that Thor, as he was once passing by with his attendant, met a giant, whom he asked to what place he was going. "To Valhall," answered he, "to fight with Thor, who with his lightning has burnt my cattle-house." "It is hardly advisable for thee to measure strength with him," answered Thor, "for I cannot imagine that thou art the man to lift this little stone up on the large one here." At this the giant waxed wroth, and grasped the stone with all his might, but was unable to raise it from the earth, so wonderfully had Thor charmed it. Thor's follower then made the attempt, and lifted the stone as though it had been a glove. The giant now aimed a blow at Thor which brought him on his knees; but Thor with his hammer struck the giant dead. He lies buried under the great stone heap hard by.

Thor was worshiped in Gothland above and more than

the other gods. The Thorbagge (scarabæus stercorarius) was sacred to him. Relative to this beetle a superstition still exists, which has been transmitted from father to son, that if any one in his path finds a Thorbagge lying helpless on its back, and turns it on its feet, he expiates seven sins; because Thor in the time of heathenism was regarded as a mediator with a higher power, or All-father. On the introduction of Christianity, the priests strove to terrify the people from the worship of their old divinities, pronouncing both them and their adherents to be evil spirits and belonging to hell. On the poor Thorbagge the name was now bestowed of Thordjefvul or Thordyfvel (Thor-devil), by which it is still known in Sweden Proper. No one now thinks of Thor, when he finds the helpless creature lying on its back; but the good-natured countryman seldom passes it without setting it on its feet, and thinking of his sins' atonement.

That the remembrance of and veneration for Thor were long retained in Norway and in Bohuslän, appears from many traditions. Of some sailors from Bohuslän, about a hundred years since, it is related, that while out in a Dutch ship from Amsterdam, on the whale fishery near Greenland, being driven out of their known course, they observed for many nights the light of a fire from an island or shore, at which some of the sailors, and among them one of the men from Bohuslän, were seized with a desire to visit the place and see what people were there. They therefore took the ship's boat and rowed to the spot. Having landed and approached the fire, they found sitting by it an old man warming himself, who immediately asked them whence they came. "From Holland," answered the man from Bohuslän. "But from what place art thou thyself?" inquired the old man. "From Säfve on Hisingen," answered the sailor. "Art thou acquainted with Thorsby?" "Yes, well." "Dost thou know where the Ulfveberg

is?" "Yes, I have often passed it, because there is a direct way from Gothenborg to Marstrand across Hisingen through Thorsby." "Do the great stones and the earth-mounds still stand in their places?" "Yes, all but one stone which is ready to fall." "Tell me further," said the old heathen, "dost thou know where Glosshed's altar is, and whether it is still safe and sound?" On the sailor answering that it was not, the old man said: "Wilt thou desire the people in Thorsby and Thores-bracka not to destroy the stones and mounds under the Ulfveberg, and above all things to keep the altar at Glosshed safe and whole, so shalt thou have a good wind to the place for which thou art bound." All this the sailor promised to perform on his return home. On asking the old man his name, and why he so anxiously inquired about such objects, he answered the sailor: "My name is Thorer Brack, and my habitation is there; but I am now a fugitive. In the great mound by the Ulfvesberg my whole race lies buried, and at Glosshed's altar we performed our worship to the gods." They then parted from the old man and had a fair wind home.

OF ROCKING STONES AND THUNDERING STONES.

With Rocking Stones, like those in England and elsewhere, and with Thundering Stones, or such as when passed over give forth a dull, hollow sound, much sorcery is practised, because they are regarded as a resort for Elves and Trolls.

SUPERSTITIOUS USAGE IN CASE OF THEFT.

The following barbarous superstition is still practised in an enlightened Christian age.

If a person is robbed, he goes to a so-called cunning man, who engages to strike out the eye of the thief. The

following is the process. The Trollman cuts a human figure on a young tree, mutters certain dire spells to obtain the devil's aid, and then drives some sharp instrument into the eye of the figure. It was also a practice to shoot with an arrow or bullet at one of the members of the figure, by which pain and sore are, it is believed, inflicted on the corresponding member of the living person.

FINNISH SUPERSTITION.

With the foregoing may be classed the Finnish superstition of producing the image of an absent person in a vessel of water and aiming a shot at it, and thereby wounding or slaying a hated enemy at many hundred miles distance. Even on a neighbour's cattle this degrading superstition has been practised. Apoplexy and other sudden diseases have hence acquired the name of *shots*, *Troll-shots*.

A young Swede had, during his wanderings in Finland, engaged himself to a handsome Finnish girl, but after his return home, had quite forgotten both his love and his promise to return to his betrothed. A Lapp skilled in the magic of his country coming one day to him, it occurred to the young man to inquire of him how it fared with his betrothed in Finland. "That you shall see yourself," answered the Lapp, who having, while muttering divers spells, filled a bucket with water, bade him come and look into it. There, we are told, the young man saw the well-known country round the cottage of his betrothed, and his heart beat violently on perceiving her pale and in tears stepping out at the door, followed by her father, with an angry countenance and holding a gun in his hand. The old Fin now approached a pail filled with water, looked in the direction whence the young man had been expected, shook his head, and cocked the gun, while the daughter stood

wringing her hands. "Now," said the Lapp, "he will shoot you, if you do not prevent it by shooting him. Make haste and take aim with your gun." The Fin, having levelled his piece, went to the pail. "Shoot now," said the Lapp, "or you are a dead man." He fired accordingly, and the Fin fell lifeless on the earth. Conscience some time after prompted the young Swede to revisit the scene of his perfidy, where he learned that the old man had died of apoplexy on the very day that the Lapp had displayed his magical skill [1].

OF GIANTS AND DWARFS.

According to the testimony of several Sagas and other writings, there dwelt in Sweden, in remote times, a gigantic, wild, cruel race called Jotens (Jotnar), and the country they inhabited, about the Gulf of Finland and thence northwards, was named Jotunaland, or Jättehem. But when a more enlightened people from Asia, who knew the God of the whole universe, and worshiped him under the name of All-father, entered Sweden across its eastern boundary, there arose between them and the Jotnar or Jätte-folk a war which lasted for many centuries. And as David slew the presumptuous giant Goliah, so did the new Asiatic settlers in the North, through skill and superior understanding, overcome the earlier, savage inhabitants o the country, who withdrew more and more into the deepest forests, and took up their abode in mountain-caves and dens. From these times are derived all our popular traditions of Mountain-trolls, Giants, and Mountain-dwellers. They are described as possessing vast stores of gold and other valuables, as bad, but credulous. Their women are described as ugly.

A distinct species of Berg- or Mountain-troll were the

[1] For more on this curious subject, see Grimm. D. M. p. 1045 *sq.* and *note.*

Dwarfs. These were good mechanics and cunning, their wives and daughters are spoken of as very beautiful. This Dwarf-race seems to spring from a people that migrated from the eastern countries at a later period, as they were acquainted with runes, which they used in sorcery, accompanied by the harp, as we read in the old ballad of Sir Tynne :—

"That was Ulfva, the little dwarf's daughter,
To her maiden thus she spoke :
Thou shalt fetch my harp of gold ;
Sir Tynne will I cause to love me.
Ye manage well the runes[1]."

* * * *
* * * *

A similar art of enchanting and bewitching the Lapplanders are supposed to possess even at the present day, and with some probability it may be conjectured that the Asiatic people, who in the Sagas are mentioned under the name of Dwarfs, was no other than an immigration of oriental Lapps, and the origin of the race among us which still bears that name : also that the Fins descend from the giants, and are thus the oldest of the races that now inhabit Sweden. These peoples had no unanimity, no general government and laws, and were therefore so easily conquered by the combined Æsir-race, who led by their *drotts* or *kings,* in two separate invasions (the Swedes and Goths) arrived in the North.

At a period when self-defence was the first duty of man and victory his greatest happiness, and even Gimle itself, or heaven, was to be gained by valour and a good sword, it was natural that well-tempered, efficient weapons should be regarded as one of the most precious possessions. A

[1] The old Danish ballad of 'Herr Tönne,' or 'Runernes Magt,' is only a variety of the Swedish one. It is printed in the Danske Viser, i. 281.

good armourer was said to be instructed by the Elves or Dwarfs. A well-hardened, good and elastic sword was usually regarded as of Dwarf workmanship. Other precious things also, particularly armlets of gold, set with jewels or of beautiful colours, were called sometimes Elfin-[1] and sometimes Dwarf-ornaments. In the smith's art the Giants and the Mountain-dwellers were considered as eminently skilful, and among the mountains are sometimes found smaller rocks detached from the larger ones, which by the common people are called Giants' anvils, on which it is supposed the Giants executed their works.

KING ERIC'S DREAM.

It was long believed by the people that King Eric was a great magician (Trollkarl) and conversant in hidden knowledge, also that he gained from Odin information concerning things that were hidden from other men. After his victory at Fyriswall, he had no more enemies to contend with him the tranquil possession of his dominions. He saw Christianity spread itself more and more in every direction, and felt conscious that he was the last heathen king in the North. He therefore made a sacrifice to Odin, that he might learn from him how many Christian kings after him should sit on the throne of Sweden. In a dream he received for answer, that he must burst King Sverker's rock, in which he would find a tablet that would elucidate all that he wished to know concerning his successors. This instruction he followed; but who this Sverker was and where his rock was, our chronicles tell us not. When the rock in question was split, there was found in it a stone tablet set round with golden plates and precious stones. On the one side was represented an oblong, quadrangular table, around which were thrice nine crowns distinguished by the names of kings; on the other side

[1] In the Völundarkviþa Völund is called *lord of alfs, companion of alfs.*

was a triangular table or plate with thrice seven crowns. All these crowns were distinguished by colours, to indicate the race of the several princes, as blue for the Swedes, green for the Norse, red for the Danes, and yellow for the Germans. This tablet, we are told, was long preserved among the treasures of the kingdom in the state treasury, until Archbishop Gustaf Trolle in the war time carried it with him to Denmark, and, after the precious stones were taken out, left it in the custody of a priest in Roeskilde. This priest took it with him to Söfde in Scania, and had it entered in the inventory of the church there. Here it was found by Nils Hvide, bishop of Lund, who stole it. A priest in Scania, named Master Jacob, composed a lampoon in verse, charging the bishop with the theft, but was unable to prove the charge, and was therefore condemned and executed at Copenhagen. His last words at the place of execution, and which stand on his grave-stone, are said to have been :—

"Skall nu Mäster Jacob miste sitt lif,
For hanen gal,
Saa er dog Bispen en tyff,
For stenen han stal."

Though now Master Jacob shall lose his life,
Ere the cock crows,
Yet is the bishop a thief,
For he stole the stone.

In a book belonging to Frösunda church in Roslagen, this story of King Eric's dream is to be found, also a representation of the tablet in Sverker's rock.

OF BIÖRN THE SWEDE, ULF JARL, AND CNUT THE GREAT.

There dwelt once in Sweden a rich man, who had a young daughter of exquisite beauty. Near the town where they dwelt there was a green and pleasant place, to which the youth of both sexes were wont to resort for amusement. It befell one day that when the damsel abovementioned was out playing with her companions, a bear came out of the forest, rushed in the midst of the terrified

children, and seizing her with his fore paws, hastened with her to his den in the forest. He showed her the greatest affection, every day procured for her both game and fruits, and let her want for nothing. But the bear having killed much cattle for his own subsistence, the people assembled in a general hunt and destroyed him. The damsel was now found again, and soon after was delivered of a son who was called Biörn (Bear). He grew up, became stronger than other men, and possessed great understanding. In this he seems to have taken after his forefathers, according to the old saying: "A bear has twelve men's understanding and six men's strength." A grandson of this Biörn was Ulf Jarl in Scania, who, against her brother's will, married Estrid, the sister of Cnut the Great. It was this Ulf who aided King Cnut, when his fleet was on the point of falling into the hands of the enemy at the isle of Helge. Yet, notwithstanding this aid, Ulf could never gain the king's friendship, and was ill rewarded in the end, as we shall presently see.

King Cnut and Ulf Jarl were sitting one day after the battle of Helge playing at chess in Roeskilde. Cnut moved a pawn, but wished to put it back; at this Ulf was so irritated that he overthrew the board and was rushing from the apartment, when the king in anger called to him: "Art thou running away, cowardly Ulf?" Ulf answered: "Thou wouldst have run farther in the fight at Helge, had I not come: I was not called cowardly Ulf when the Swedes were beating you like dogs, till I came to your relief." It soon appeared how unwise it is for an inferior person to speak too freely to a superior. On the morrow the king was informed that the jarl had taken refuge in the church of St. Lucius, and thereupon sent a man who slew him before the high altar. After the extinction of the house of Cnut in the male line, Svend, the son of Ulf Jarl and Estrid, ascended the Danish throne, the last of

whose descendants was the celebrated Queen Margaret, ob. A.D. 1412.

CHRISTIAN-HEATHEN TRADITIONS OF TROLLS, ETC.

The first light of Christianity was insufficient to dispel all the darkness of heathenism. There still remained on the public ways and in fields small oratories built over some pagan idol, for the accommodation both of travellers and of those employed in the fields. From these oratories or 'scurds,' as they were called, the heathen images were indeed removed, but those of saints were set up in their place, and many a neophyte prayed sometimes to the Virgin Mary, St. Peter and other saints, and at others to Thor and Freyia. The Christians, therefore, strove now with all their might to suppress among the people all faith in these heathen deities, condemning them as spirits of hell that sought the ruin of mankind. The spectres of heathenism, Trolls and Elves, together with those, in their mounds or barrows, who had died in the time of idolatry, were represented as bugbears to Christian men, so that they were always held in fear, and trembled on their way, particularly by night, for the 'evil meeting,' that is, the meeting with Trolls or Elves, whence, it was said, many diseases and troubles were caused to mortals; nor was self-interest behindhand in finding remedies for all such calamities. The simple people paid dearly to monks, troll-wives and exorcising women for these remedies, consisting in superstitious mummery with incense and spells, performed in crossways, churches, and at Elf-stones. At such places strange prayers were said, mingled with the invocation and misuse of the names of Jesus and the saints. These prayers, which were for the most part composed in the monasteries, were sometimes in rime. We could adduce some that have been in use even in our time; but, as offensive to Christian ears, they had better be forgotten

What still remains of these superstitions of Elves, Trolls and the like, either in traditions or popular belief, shall be here briefly related.

OF ELVES.

Both in the heathen and the Christian supernatural world, Elves occupy the most conspicuous place. What we have already communicated concerning the pagan belief in Elves has been propagated by traditions, from age to age, until our times, with the addition of much Christian fable. There are still to be found elf-altars, where offerings are made for the sick. The so-called wise women—the Horgabrudar of our days—anoint with swine's fat, which was used in the pagan offerings, and read prayers, which they say are mystic; after which something metallic, that has been worn or borne by the sick person—a small coin or even a pin is sufficient—and lastly a cross (as a token that the Saviour's power is also here superstitiously invoked), are laid upon the elf-mill (älf-qvarn) or, as it is also called, elf-pot (älf-gryta). These conjuring women (signerskor), when they are called to the sick, usually begin with pouring melted lead into water, and from the forms which the fluid metal assumes, they usually pretend to judge that the disease has been caused by Elves[1]; when having secured payment, they commence a new juggle, which they call 'striking down,' or 'anointing for the Elves,' at sunset on the following Thursday. Some country people will anoint the elf-mill without applying to a cunning woman; these read no prayers, but instead only sigh out: "Lord, help me!"

Among the oldest popular traditions concerning Elves, is that which is to be read on the runic stone at Lagnö, on Aspö, in Södermanland. Within a serpentine line of runes, there sits, cut out of the rock, an Elf with out-

[1] See pp. 47 *sq.* for a spell repeated on such an occasion.

stretched legs, seizing with his hands the heads of two serpents. The runes inform us, that "Gislög caused those characters to be executed after (in memory of) Thord; and Slodi caused true witness to be taken concerning the Elves that he saw, and something else——what was that?" These seem to have been cut with the object of bearing testimony to the Elves and other Trolls that Slodi had seen about the rock.

The traditions concerning Elves current among the people divide them into three classes: those belonging to the earth, the air and the water.

OF THE MOUNT-FOLK.

Among the Elves belonging to the earth, or, perhaps more correctly, the subterranean Elves, the Mount- or Berg-folk occupy the most prominent place. It seems probable that Christian compassion for those that died in the time of heathenism, without participation in the blessings promised in the Gospel, but in heathen wise have been placed in unhallowed earth, is the foundation for the cheerless notion, that, awaiting in their green mounds the great day of universal redemption in fear and trembling, they are tormented by sensual desires, as formerly in life; that they long for the love and society of Christians, yet, when they come in contact with them, cause them injury, and if speedy rescue come not, even death itself. In stature the Elves are said to be equal to the generality of the human race, but are more slim and delicate. Their young females are described as extremely beautiful, slender as lilies, white as snow, and with sweet, enticing voices. Their time for playing and dancing is from sunset till cock-crowing; but when the cock has crowed they have no longer permission to stay above ground. Of all the spectre world it is said, that if they do not go to rest when the cock has crowed thrice, they become "dagstånd," that is,

stationary on the spot where the third cock-crowing reached their ears[1]. It is said to be dangerous for a person to come in contact with such an invisible 'dagständ' on his way, and many are believed to have contracted pain and sickness from that cause. If the wanderer in a summer's evening lays himself to rest by an elf-mount, he soon hears the tones of a harp with sweet singing. If he then promises them redemption, he will hear the most joyful notes resound from numerous stringed instruments; but if he says, "Ye have no Redeemer," then with cries and loud lament they will dash their harps in pieces; after which all is silent in the mount. In the green woods and valleys, in the meadows and on the hills, the Elves perform their nightly 'stimm,' that is, play and dance, from which cause the grass grows luxuriant and of a darker green in circles; these by the people are called elf-dances, and must not be trampled on.

In nearly all the most distinguished families of Sweden are to be found jewels or ornaments connected with traditions of Trolls and Elves. Thus it is related of the State-councillor Harald Stake's wife, how late one summer's evening an elf-woman came to her, who desired to borrow her bridal dress to wear at an elfin wedding. After some consideration the lady resolved on lending it to her. In a few days it was returned, but set with gold and pearls on every seam, and had hanging from it a finger-ring of the finest gold set with the most costly stones, which afterwards, together with the tradition, passed for several centuries as an heirloom in the Stake family.

Among the simple country folks, even at the present day, a bridegroom stands in dread of the envy of the Elves, to counteract which it has long been a custom to lay in the clothes on the wedding day certain strong-smelling

[1] See vol. i. p. 8, *note* 3.

plants, as garlic or valerian. Near gates and in crossways there is supposed to be the greatest danger. If any one asks a bridegroom the reason of these precautions, he will answer: "On account of envy." And there is no one so miserable whose bride will not think herself envied on her wedding day, if by no others, at least by the Elves. Hence the tenour of most of the elfin traditions is nearly as follows:—

The bride sits ready in her bridal bower, in anxious expectation and surrounded by her bridesmaids. The bridegroom saddles his grey steed, and clad in knightly attire, with his hawk perched proudly on his shoulder, he rides forth from his mother's hall, to fetch home his bride. But in the wood where he is wont to hunt with hawk and hound, an elfin maiden has noticed the comely youth, and is now on the watch for an opportunity, though for ever so short a time, to clasp him to her breast in the flowery grove; or, at least, to the sweet tones of their stringed instruments, lightly to float along with him, hand in hand, on the verdant field. As he draws near to the elf-mount, or is about to ride through the gateway of the castle, his ears are ravished with most wondrous music, and from among the fairest maidens that he there sees dancing in a ring, the Elf-king's daughter herself steps forth fairer than them all, as it is said in the lay:—

> The damsel held forth her snow-white hand:
> "Come join in the merry dance with me."

If the knight allows himself to be charmed, and touches the fascinating hand, he is conducted to Elfland, where in halls indescribably beautiful, and gardens such as he had never beheld, he wanders about, on his Elf-bride's arm, amid lilies and roses. If at length the remembrance of his mourning betrothed enters his mind, and the Elves, who do not deliberately desire evil to mankind, are moved

to lead him out on his way, he sees, it is true, his former home again, but he has been absent about forty years, though to him it seemed an hour only. On his return no one knows him, he is a stranger on whom all look with wonder. The old people remember a young knight who disappeared about forty years before, when he rode forth to fetch his bride:—and his bride? she has died of grief.

According to another turn of the story, the knight answers the elfin damsel's invitation to dance with her thus:—

"I may not tread the dance with thee;
My bride in her bower is awaiting me."

The elves are then compelled to leave him, but pale and sick to death he returns to his mother, who anxiously addresses him:—

"But tell me now, my dearest son,
Why are thy cheeks so deadly pale?"—
"Oh well may my cheeks be deadly pale;
For yonder I 've been at the elfin dance."—
"And what shall I answer, oh tell to me,
When thy fair young bride asks after thee?"—
"Oh say I have ridden to the gay green wood,
To chase the deer with hawk and hound."
But he will return,
While the leaves of the forest are green.
The young bride waited two long long days,
Then rode with her maids to the bridegroom's hall.
But he will return, etc.
And there they pour'd mead and there they pour'd wine:
"But where is my bridegroom, thy dear young son?"—
But he will return, etc.
"Thy bridegroom's gone to the gay green wood,
To chase the deer with hawk and hound."
But he will return, etc.

But the bride had a presentiment that he would never return, and going to his bed, and drawing the sheet aside,

there saw him lying cold and pale. At the sight her heart brake, and when morning came, three corpses were borne from the bridal hall; for his mother had also died of grief.

In the old Danish ballad (Elveskud) the elfin lady, on Oluf's refusal to dance with her, says :—

> "If then thou wilt not dance with me,
> Sickness and death shall follow thee."

She then strikes him violently between the shoulders, lifts him on his horse, and desires him to ride home to his betrothed, etc.

The Swedes have a similar ballad, and the Breton ballad of 'Lord Nann and the Korrigan' bears a striking resemblance to the Scandinavian [1].

ELFIN GARDENS.

In most country places traditions are current of magic gardens. The spot where such are said to exist, is pointed out by the country people, and some person is always named who has been conducted into them, has wandered about under trees of a finer verdure than any to be seen elsewhere, has tasted fruit the like of which is not to be found in any other place; seen flowers of extraordinary beauty, but afterwards, when all this has been sought for on the same spot, not a trace was to be found: all was either wild wood or plain open fields.

OF BERGTAGNING (MOUNT-TAKING).

In old writings many stories are told of persons that have been 'mount-taken,' that is, carried off by the Elves into their mounts. Examinations before magistrates and the clergy have taken place even in our time into cases of individuals, who have imagined themselves to have been so carried off, and who in the delirium of fever have believed that they saw elves and wood-demons, which

[1] See a translation of it in Keightley, F. M. p. 133, and the original in Villemarqué, Chants Populaires.

distempered state of body has not seldom been followed by death itself.

Elfin halls or elfin rooms are grots or subterranean houses in mountains and hills, into which sometimes the wanderer enters and reposes; but when he again seeks for the place, he finds it no more. At Estorp on Mösse berg there dwelt an intelligent man, who related as truth, how in returning home one beautiful summer evening from Fahlköping, he took a wrong path, and among the rocks unexpectedly found one of these elf-halls, which he entered and seated himself on a mossy bench in a delightful coolness. On leaving it, he particularly noticed the spot, in order that he might again find so remarkable a place, but could never discover it afterwards.

Three sisters (thus relates the survivor of them) went out one beautiful summer's day to a meadow near the mansion of Boda in Bohuslän. Near the meadow there is a mountain, about which they had often played, and knew the place well. To their great astonishment, however, they found themselves at the entrance of a most beautiful grotto. It was an elf-hall, of a triangular form, with moss-covered seats around it. In the middle there stood a little fir-tree, as an ornament, on the floor. They entered, reposed themselves in the refreshing cool, took accurate notice of the place, but could never find it again.

THE FLYING ELVES.

Mention of these occurs but rarely. They are described as extremely beautiful, with small wings on their snow-white shoulders; but whether these wings are a borrowed plumage, or belong to the body of these tender beings, has not been decided; though the first opinion seems most in accordance with the Sagas, seeing that mortal men have taken such elfin maidens to wife. Transformed to swans,

in full plumage, the people say they have often seen them coming through the air, and descending into some water to bathe; but as soon as they enter the water, they assume the fairest human forms.

A young hunter once saw three such swans descend on the sea-shore. With astonishment he observed that they laid their plumages aside, which bore a resemblance to linen, and that, instead of swans, three damsels of dazzling whiteness were swimming in the water. He soon saw them leave the water, draw on their linen coverings, which then became changed to swans' plumage, and fly away. One of them, the youngest and fairest, had so captivated the heart of the young man, that he could rest neither by night nor day, for thinking of her lovely form. His foster-mother soon perceived that neither the chase nor the other pastimes, in which he formerly found delight, afforded him any more pleasure, and therefore resolved to discover the cause of his sorrow. From himself she soon learned the wondrous sight he had witnessed, and that he must either win the fair maiden or never again enjoy happiness. His foster-mother assured him: "I can advise a remedy for thy affliction. Go next Thursday at sunset to the spot where thou last sawest her. The three swans will not fail to come. Observe where thy chosen damsel lays her linen; take it, and hasten with it from the shore. Soon thou wilt hear two of the swans fly away with a great noise, but the third, in search of her plumage, will in her distress come to thee; but although she beseech thee on her knees, do not give back the linen, if thou wilt have the maiden in thy power." The young man was not backward in following this counsel. Long seemed the days till the coming of Thursday, but longer still seemed to him the hours of that day. At length the sun sank, and ere long a rustling was heard in the air, and the three swans descended on the shore. They were

instantly changed to three most beauteous damsels, and having laid their linen on the grass, they hastened to the white sands, and were soon covered with the waves. From his hiding-place the young hunter had closely watched his beloved, and where she had laid her plumage, which was now fine snow-white linen. He then stole forth, carried it off and concealed it among the foliage. Shortly after he heard two of the swans flying away with a great rustling; but the third, as his foster-mother had said, came and fell before him on her snowy knees, praying him to restore her plumage. But the hunter refused, and taking her in his arms, wrapped his cloak round the tender damsel, lifted her on his good steed, and bore her to his home. His foster-mother soon made all things ready for their marriage, and they both lived happily together. Of their children it was said, that fairer never played together. But when seven years had passed, the hunter, one Thursday night, when they were going to bed, related to his wife how he had obtained possession of her; and at her request showed her the white linen, which he had till then concealed; but no sooner had she got it in her hand, than she became changed to a swan, and vanished like lightning through an open window. The husband, it is said, did not live long after that luckless day [1].

The grass which, in luxuriant circles, called, as we have seen, *elf-dances*, is here and there to be observed in the fields, is said so to flourish from the dancing of the elves, and is thence called älfexing (cynosurus cæruleus). The miliary fever is said by the country people to be caused by the elf-mote, or meeting with elves, as a remedy for

[1] The origin of this and other kindred tales must, no doubt, be sought for in the East. The 'Peri-wife,' from the Bahar Danush, is almost identical with the above. See Keightley, F. M. p. 20.

which the lichen called älfnäfver (lichen aphosus, or lichen caninus) is to be sought for. In old topographical works there is no lack of accounts of families, which, on the mother's side, are supposed to descend from such beings. In Smäland a tradition has been credited of a well-known family, whose ancestress, a young, beautiful elfin girl, is said to have flown with the sunbeams through a knot-hole in the wall, and by the heir of the family to have been taken to wife. After having given her husband seven sons, she vanished by the way she came.

LÖFJERSKOR.

The 'Löfjerskor' named in the old Swedish catechism seem identical with the Grove-damsels (Lundjungfrur), a species of Elves which is also called the Grove-folk (Lundfolk). The sacred groves of the heathens which, by the ecclesiastical law, it was forbidden to approach with superstitious worship, were believed, in the time of paganism, to be protected by invisible deities. If a lime or other tree, either in a forest or solitary, grew more vigorously than the other trees, it was called a *habitation-tree* (boträd), and was thought to be inhabited by an Elf (Rä, Rädande), who, though invisible, dwelt in its shade, rewarded with health and prosperity the individual that took care of the tree, and punished those who injured it.

Thus did our heathen forefathers hold in reverence and awe such groves and trees, because they regarded them as given by the Almighty as ornaments to his noble creation, as well as to afford protection to the husbandman and cattle against the scorching heat of the midday sun. In this and in many other instances, simple Antiquity may serve us as a lesson not wantonly to destroy the life even of a shoot, which may one day become a useful, umbrageous tree, or to injure and profane a grove, into which no reflecting Christian can enter, for the purpose of en-

joying its refreshing shade, without thinking of the Creator's goodness, and calling to mind how the Saviour of the world had a grove, a garden, to which he oftentimes went, with his disciples, when he would discourse with them on heavenly things and on the immortality of their souls. It was under the shade of a tree that he prayed, and there the comforting angel appeared and strengthened him. Let a Christian meditate on this, and let him have a care of all planting for the ornament and benefit of the earth; and if, when out on his way, he feels tempted to break off a growing shoot, thus let him think: "I will not destroy a growing life, I will not spoil the embellishment of my mother-earth; it is my neighbour's property, to injure it is unjust, and all injustice is sin."

The sanctity of the heathen groves and trees originated, it would seem, from the custom of hanging there the limbs of the human and other victims, after they had been for a time immersed in the sacred fountain. But rational Christians have had another reason for retaining the superstition, namely on account of its aid in withholding mischievous persons from violence to the woods and trees. Even at the present day the people in many places point out such groves and trees as no one may approach with an axe. These noted trees often stand alone, and have a singular aspect. Stories are in some places not wanting among the common people of persons, who by cutting a chip or branch from a 'habitation tree,' has in consequence been struck with death. Such a famed pine was the 'klinta tall' in Westmanland. Old and decayed it appeared to the traveller standing on the bare rock, until a few years ago it fell down from age. A mermaid, who ruled in the neighbouring creek of the Mälar lake, was said to inhabit the mountain under the pine, and to have been that tree's 'Rå.' The country people had frequently seen snow-white cattle driven up from the lake to the

meadow beneath it. The trunk and branches of the tree still lie untouched on the rock. In an old writing there is a story of a man, who was about to cut down a juniper bush in a wood, when a voice was heard from the earth, saying, "Friend, hew me not!" But he gave another stroke, when blood flowed from the root. Terrified and sick he hastened home[1]. In ballads and traditions stories occur of young maidens that have been transformed to trees and bushes through sorcery, but of the 'Löfjerskor' there are not many tales; nor is it easy to arrive at the origin of the name. But the 'Horgabrudar' in the groves of the heathen divinities were much consulted by the people in cases of doubt and difficulty, whence may probably be derived the superstition, in later times, of seeking help of the 'Rås' that inhabit trees, and are called Löfjerskor, in cases of sickness and trouble, against which there stands a prohibition in our ancient catechism. Loki's mother was named Löfja (Laufey); it seems, therefore, not improbable that evil Troll-wives and Löf-maids derive their name from her. The heathen, in all countries, have celebrated their idolatrous rites in groves and under trees. In the Lives of the Saints it is related of St. Martin, how among a heathen people, who were willing to adopt Christianity, he demolished a temple, and met with no opposition; but on his proceeding to cut down a fir that stood close by, the people rushed forward, and would on no account allow the tree to be destroyed.

THE SKOGSRÅ.—THE SJÖRÅ.[2]

Of the same race with the Elves already mentioned, the Skogs- or Forest-elves seem to have been originally, and have undoubtedly belonged to the time of heathenism. As

[1] Manifestly from the story of Polydorus in the Æneis, iii. 21, *sqq.* et alibi.

[2] Compounds of skog, *wood, forest*; sjö, *sea, lake*; and rå, *fairy, goblin*.

the merwife for fishermen, so is the Skogsrä for hunters regarded among the unlucky objects to meet with. According to old hunting traditions, the Skogs-elf announces her approach by a peculiar, sharp, rushing whirlwind, that shakes the trunks of the trees so that they seem ready to snap asunder. If then the hunter spits and strikes fire, there is no danger, because it is mere noise, there being no power in such winds. The Skogsrä, according to the popular belief, is only of the female sex; whence comes the superstition, that it presages badly for the hunter's luck, if, on leaving home, the first person he meets is a female. He then spits and calls it käringmöte (*lit.* crone-mote). In the Sagas these forest-wives are represented as evil, wanton and foreboders of misfortune; though stories are, nevertheless, told by hunters of their having seen these beings come very friendly to their fires, who, when they have been suffered to remain in peace, have said at their departure: "There will be excellent sport to-day." On which occasions they have invariably killed an abundance of game. When the hunters are reposing in the forest at midnight, they will come to warm themselves by their fires, taking care to show their front side only, and always moving so that their backs may not be exposed to view. Those who have tales to tell of these beings, usually conclude by saying something like the following: "Just as she was standing before the fire, quite proud and showing her beautiful person, I took a brand from the fire and struck her, saying: 'Go to the woods, thou odious Troll!' She then hurried away with a whining cry, and a strong wind rose, so that the very trees and stones seemed as if they would be torn up. When she turned her back she appeared as hollow as a hollow tree or a baker's trough." If a Christian man has intercourse with a forest-woman, there will be born a pernicious being, to the sorrow and misfortune of others.

The Skogsrå is further described as a female spirit of the woods, and as a young person in elegant attire, of friendly demeanour and small figure, but—with claws instead of nails! An eye-witness of her existence relates, that once when out grouse-shooting, having just kindled a fire, and while taking his repast, she appeared before him, and kindly greeted him. To his invitation to warm herself she responded by a friendly nod. He then offered her a share of his fare, holding it, however, at the end of his axe, as he felt somewhat diffident at the sight of her talons; but she declined his offer, smiled and vanished. He now shot five grouse. If he had not offered a part of his fare to the Skogsrå, he would not have killed a single bird.

He, with seven others, was once sitting watching grouse, when a Skogsrå darted past them from a tree. Never before had they seen the birds so numerous, but they missed every one. For fourteen days their shooting seemed bewitched, until at length he was so fortunate as to see another Rä come rustling by from a tree, and to throw his knife over her, whereby the spell was broken. These little goblins milk the cows and deprive the horses of their strength, but anything of steel cast over them hinders them from doing harm. The narrator of the above[1] secured his horses with garlic and asafœtida, which must be placed concealed somewhere about the head.

The same individual relates, that being with several of his neighbours on a fishing expedition, they began to joke about the Siörå and beings of a similar kind, treating them as ridiculous fictions, when on a sudden a Siörå appeared before them, and with a loud plash plunged into the lake. They saw fish in abundance, but could not catch one.

[1] He was Arndt's postillion during a part of his journey.

OF WATER ELVES.

I.

THE MERMAID.

Learned men, who have given attention to the wonders of the creation, have described a water to be found in certain lakes, called spectre-water (spökvatten). It has the property, when warmed by the sun, of sending up a thick, snow-white mist, resembling at one time a human form, at another that of an animal, changing its appearance and course as it is driven by the wind. The simple people, that dwell by such lakes, bewildered by this phenomenon, relate as a fact that they have seen, innumerable times, a Mermaid sitting by the lake, combing her long locks with a golden comb, or standing on the islets, spreading out her snowy linen on the bushes, or driving before her her snow-white cattle. The Mermaid is thought to be false and deceitful, and is spoken of by the fishermen as the Skogsrä is by the hunters. They all have something to say about her, and anticipate a bad capture, storm and tempest, when she makes her appearance. It is said to be good and advisable, when the fisher sees one of these beings, not to speak of it even to his comrades, but to take his flint and steel and strike fire. From the time that Thor hurled his thunder at the Trolls, they lost, it is said, both power and courage. Hence it is, that in our country places, in every house where there is a new-born child, either fire on the hearth, or a light, must burn by day and night, until the child is christened; else it is to be feared that the Trolls may come and carry off the child, and leave one of their own in its stead. Of the Mermaids it is said that they dwell at the bottom of the ocean or of an inland sea, have castles and mansions, also domestic animals and cattle, which are called 'brand'-cattle, the signification of which is far from evident[1].

[1] Qu. Angl. *brindled.*

In West Gothland, in the district of Biärke, there is a lake with beautifully wooded shores, called Anten. On an isle in this lake there was formerly an ancient castle, remains of which are still to be seen, called Loholm, in which dwelt Sir Gunnar, a renowned knight, and ancestor of the famous family of Leionhufvud, or Lewenhaupt. Once, when out on the lake he had fallen into danger, a Mer-wife came to his aid, but exacted from him the promise, that on a certain day he should meet her again at the same place. One Thursday evening she sat expecting the knight; but he forgot his promise. She then caused the water of the lake to swell up over Loholm, until Sir Gunnar was forced to take refuge in a higher apartment; but the water reached even that. He then sought safety in the drawbridge tower; but there the billows again overtook him. He next committed himself to a boat, which sank near a large stone, called to this day Gunnar's stone; from which time Sir Gunnar, it is said, lives constantly with the Mer-wife. When fishermen or the country people row by the stone, they usually lift their hats, as a salutation to Sir Gunnar, in the belief that if they neglected to do so, they would have no success. From that time no one dwelt at Loholm, of the materials of which was built the noble castle of Gräfsnäs, on a peninsula in the same lake, with towers, ditches, and drawbridges, remains of which are still visible. From this Sir Gunnar descended Erik Abrahamsson, father-in-law of Gustavus the First.

II.

FOUNTAIN MAIDENS.

Mention has been already made of the priestesses of the heathen gods, or Horgabrudar, who watched by the sacred fountains, in which the members of the victims

were washed, and received gifts from the people for advice in cases of sickness, as well as on other occasions. After the country became Christian, the monks and priests took the fountains under their care, placed by them images of saints or a cross, and caused the people to make offerings to, and seek health from, the saint that was supposed to have the well under his protection. Thus did Christian superstition step into the place of pagan, and continues even to the present day. But the heathen Horgabrudar, who died without baptism or sacrament, were still in the remembrance of the people, and had become Elves, who await salvation, dwelling till doomsday under their fountains' silvery roof. In song and in story the beauty of the Fountain-maids is praised, when they have been seen by mortal man and displayed their fair forms either in the depth of a fountain, or reposing by its side on a bed of flowers. To the person who cleanses a fountain, or plants over it an umbrageous tree, the Fountain-maid will be kind and propitious; while he who profanes or sullies the fountain's salubrious stream will be followed by sickness and misfortune.

III.

THE NECK AND THE STRÖMKARL.

The Neck appears sometimes in the form of a grown man, and is particularly dangerous to haughty and pert damsels; sometimes in that of a comely youth, with his lower extremities like those of a horse; sometimes like an old man with a long beard; and occasionally as a handsome youth, with yellow locks flowing over his shoulders and a red cap, sitting in a summer evening on the surface of the water with a golden harp in his hand. If any one wishes to learn music of him, the most welcome remuneration that can be offered to him is a black lamb, especially if the hope of his salvation—which the Neck has

greatly at heart—be at the same time expressed to him. Hence when two boys once said to a Neck, "What good do you gain by sitting here and playing? you will never enjoy eternal happiness," he began to weep bitterly [1].

If one of the common people has a disease, for which they cannot otherwise account, they imagine that it is caused by the spirit of the place where the disease was contracted, or was supposed to be contracted; whence the expression, which is often to be heard, "He has met with something bad in the air, in the water, in the field." In such case the Neck must be propitiated, which is done in the following manner: They pour a drink into a cup, and mix with it the scrapings from the wedding ring, from silver, brass, or any other metal possessed by inheritance, but so that the odd number, particularly three, be observed. With this mixture they repair to the place where they suppose the disease was contracted, and pour it out over the left shoulder. On the way they must neither turn about nor utter a sound. If there be any uncertainty as to the place, the pouring is made on the door-post, or on an ant-hill [2].

A Neck at Bohuus, in West Gothland, had transformed himself into a horse and gone on the bank to eat; but a cunning man, whose suspicions were roused, threw such a curiously contrived halter over him, that he could not get loose again. The man now kept the Neck with him all the spring, and tormented him most thoroughly, by making him plough all his fields. At length the halter accidentally slipping off, the Neck sprang like lightning into the water, dragging the harrow after him [3].

A Neck who takes up his abode under a bridge or in a stream, is commonly called a Strömkarl. He always plays on the viol; and when any musician plays with extraordi-

[1] Faye, p. 54. Svenske Folk-Visor, iii. 127.
[2] Arndt. iii. 15.
[3] Faye, p. 53.

nary boldness and skill, he is said to play with the Strömkarl's touch. Near Hornborgabro, in West Gothland, a Strömkarl was once heard singing, to a pleasant melody, these words thrice repeated:—"I know,—and I know,—and I know—that my Redeemer liveth." As seen by sailors, the Neck is described as an old man, sitting on a rock, wringing the water out of his large, green beard. Their appearance is said to forebode storm and tempest. Under this form they may be more correctly called Mermen. He is sometimes seen on the shore under the form of a handsome horse, but with his hoofs reversed.

A priest riding one evening over a bridge, heard the most delightful tones of a stringed instrument, and, on looking round, saw a young man, naked to the waist, sitting on the surface of the water, with a red cap and yellow locks, as already described. He saw that it was the Neck, and in his zeal addressed him thus:—"Why dost thou so joyously strike thy harp? Sooner shall this dried cane that I hold in my hand grow green and flower, than thou shalt obtain salvation." Thereupon the unhappy musician cast down his harp, and sat bitterly weeping on the water. The priest then turned his horse, and continued his course. But lo! before he had ridden far, he observed that green shoots and leaves, mingled with most beautiful flowers, had sprung from his old staff. This seemed to him a sign from heaven, directing him to preach the consoling doctrine of redemption after another fashion. He therefore hastened back to the mournful Neck, showed him the green, flowery staff, and said: "Behold! now my old staff is grown green and flowery like a young branch in a rose garden; so likewise may hope bloom in the hearts of all created beings; for their Redeemer liveth!" Comforted by these words, the Neck again took his harp, the joyous tones of which resounded along the shore the whole livelong night.

The Strömkarl's melody (Strömkarlslag) has eleven varieties, ten only of which may be danced, the eleventh belongs to the night-spirit and his troop; for if any one were to cause it to be played, tables and benches, pots and cups, old men and grandmothers, blind and lame, even babes in the cradle, would begin to dance [1].

Those who are desirous of learning the Strömkarl's ten variations, must place their violin for three Thursday nights under a bridge, where there is a constantly running stream. On the third night, the Neck, or Strömkarl, will come and strike the strings of his instrument, when the learner must tune his fiddle and accompany him. If the eleventh melody is played, inanimate things, as trees and stones, will dance.

An equally wonderful composition is the Elf-king's tune, which no musician will venture to play; for having once begun it, he cannot cease from playing, unless he can play it backwards, or some one behind him cuts the strings of the violin [2].

The same anxiety as to their state hereafter prevails among the *Daoine Shi* of the Scottish Highlands, one of whom, issuing from a lake, questions a clergyman on the subject. Like the Neck, they also have melodious music [3].

Of the earths which gather among the foam in the still creeks, and of river waters, there is formed a loose, white, porous kind of stone, resembling picked or pulled bread: this is called 'Necke-bröd;' the masses or cakes of which are called marlekor (marekor), because the *mare* (still water) cements them together. The beautiful white or yellow flowers, that grow on the banks of lakes and rivers, and are called 'Neck-roses,' are well-known memorials of the popular idea of the Neck. The poisonous

[1] Arndt, iv. 241.

[2] Thiele, i. 166, *sq.* edit. 1820.

[3] Stewart, Superstitions of the Highlands, quoted by Keightley, F. M. p. 385.

root of the water hemlock (cicuta virosa) formerly bore the name of the Necke-root.

In Beowulf frequent mention occurs of the Nicor (pl. Niceras)[1]. Connected with the name is that of Odin, Hnikarr, in his character of a sea-god[2].

The following extract may serve as a commentary on what is related both of the Swedish Neck and Danish Nök. "Husby is very pleasantly situated, and its church is said to be one of the oldest in Sweden. Here is shown St. Siegfried's well, with the water of which the holy man Sigfridus, according to the tradition, baptized king Olov Skötkonung. The well is still famous, and is said on many occasions to be used nightly by the country people. Fifty years ago" (the author travelled in 1803) "many superstitions and ceremonies were practised at wells. Almost every province had some that at certain periods of the summer were visited, and into which a piece of money, iron or any metal was cast as an offering. But this illusion is now almost extinct. Still it is, nevertheless, worth inquiring, *what* power, and *why* a power is everywhere ascribed to metal of counteracting the influence of witchcraft and of evil spirits? For no other reason than to propitiate the Neck of the well, did people throw into it anything metallic. Connected with the above is the popular belief, that, when bathing in the sea, a person should cast into it, close by him, a fire-steel, a knife, or the like, to prevent any monster from hurting him. The steel, or whatever it may be, may be taken out again. Formerly a fire-steel, or a pair of scissors, was laid on the cradle of a child, until it was christened. Even to the present day the custom exists of pouring melted silver or other metal on the spot where it is believed that a person is suffering from the work of the evil one. With such a pouring the injury is also poured out."

[1] Ver. 838, 1144, 2854.

[2] Edda-Sæm. 46, 91, 184. Edda-Snorra, 3, 24, 322.

Having thus propitiated, or rather neutralized the pernicious propensities of, the Neck, it was not unusual while bathing to address him scoffingly in the following words: 'Neck, Neck, Näleputa, du är på lann, men jag är i vann' (Neck, Neck, needle-thief, thou art on land, but I am in the water). On quitting the water, the person took the steel again, saying: 'Neck, Neck, needle-thief, I am on land, and thou art in the water[1].'

THE WILD HUNT.

In Scania the sounds like voices, that are at times heard in the air in November and December, are by the common people called Odin's hunt[2]. Grimm also connects the Wild Hunt (Wütendes Heer) with Odin (Ohg. Wuotan), the tradition of which is current over almost all Germany. In the course of time, after the introduction of Christianity, the pagan deity degenerated into a wild hunter, regarding whom almost every place where he is said to ride has its tradition.

MYSTIC ANIMALS.

According to the Swedish popular belief, there are certain animals which should not at any time be spoken of by their proper names, but always with euphemisms, and kind allusions to their character. If any one speaks slightingly to a cat, or beats her, her name must not be uttered; for she belongs to the hellish crew, and is intimate with the Bergtroll in the mountains, where she often visits. In speaking of the cuckoo, the owl, and the magpie, great caution is necessary, lest one should be ensnared, as they are birds of sorcery. Such birds, also snakes, one ought not to kill without cause, as their associates might avenge them. It is particularly sinful to tread toads to

[1] Arndt, i. 259, *sq.*; iii. 17, *sq.*

[2] These sounds are by Nilsson (Skandiv. Fauna, ii. 106) ascribed to certain water-fowls on their way to the South.

death, as they are often enchanted princesses. Many a one has become lame without fall or fracture, but as a penalty for such wantonness. In speaking of the Troll-pack or Witch-crew, one must name fire and water, and the name of the church to which one belongs; then no injury can arise. The weasel must not be so called, but the *aduine*; the fox, *blue-foot*, or *he that goes in the forest*; and the bear, *the old one* (Gubbe, Gammeln), *grandfather* (Storfar), Naskus; rats, *the long-bodied*; mice, *the small grey*; the seal, *brother Lars*; the wolf, *gold-foot* or *grey-foot, grey-tosse*, not *varg*, because it is said that formerly, when the now dumb animals could speak, the wolf made this announcement:—

> Kallar du mig *Varg*, så blir jag dig arg,
> Men kallar du mig *af Guld*, så blir jag dig huld.
>
> If thou callest me *Varg*, I will be wroth with thee,
> But if thou callest me *of gold*, I will be kind to thee.

Even inanimate things are not at all times to be called by their usual names: fire, for instance, is on some occasions not to be called *eld* or *ell* but *hetta* (heat); water used for brewing, not *vatn*, but *lag* or *löu*, else the beer would not be so good[1].

The magpie—like others of the raven or crow family—is also a mystic bird, a downright witches' bird, belonging to the devil and the other hidden powers of night. When the witches, on Walpurgis night, ride to the Bläkulle, they turn themselves into magpies. When they are moulting in summer, and become bald about the neck, the country people say they have been to the Bläkulle, and helped the evil one to get his hay in, and that the yoke has rubbed their feathers off.

The above superstition of the wolf is very ancient and wide-spread, an

[1] Arndt, i. 49; iii. 18, 19. Thiele, iii. 122, edit. 1820. Finn Magnusen, Den Ældre Edda, ii. 9.

evident trace of it existing in Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse: "gryre sceal for greggum" (terror shall there be for *the grey one*)[1].

THE MOUNTAIN-TROLL.

I.

The extraordinary tales of Mountain-trolls and their kidnappings that are told by credible persons, and confirmed by very singular circumstances, might afford ground for the supposition that the primitive inhabitants of Sweden, the wild mountaineers, had not altogether died out, but that in the recesses of the great mountain-forests some in recent times might have still resided. Memorials of the hostility entertained by these people against the light of Christianity are preserved in the traditions concerning the several stones or masses of rock called *giant-casts*. These are shown by the people in all country places, and are usually in such situations as to give birth to the tradition of their having been hurled from a mountain towards some church. "The Giant," as the story goes, "could not endure the noise of the bells from the holy edifice, and therefore cast this rock, in the hope of knocking it down, but being too strong, he hurled it far beyond the church." Or it is said: "The stone was too heavy, and the church too far away, so that it fell short of the mark." In some of these stones, as in the one near Enköping, are to be seen marks as if made by the five fingers of a gigantic hand. Near the celebrated church of Warnhem lies the Himmelsberg, in which, as we are told, a giant dwelt, until the convent bells ringing for prayers drove him away. It is related that, on leaving the mountain, he inquired of a lad, that worked in the neighbourhood, in which direction Alleberg lay? for thither he intended to take his course. The lad having directed him, he went off as in a whirlwind, and the lad now discovered, to his no small astonishment, that his forefinger, with which he had pointed out the way,

[1] Cod. Exon. p. 342. Kraka Mál, p. 54, edit. Rafn.

had followed along with the giant. In the Description of Uppland there is a story of a mountain near Lagga church, and how a giant with his family quitted it on account of the bells, "the sound of which he was not inclined to hear." "When wilt thou come again?" asked a man standing by, and witnessing their departure; whereupon the man of the mountain answered: "When Lagga fiord is field, and Öst-tuna lake meadow." The fiord and the lake are now like to become field and meadow; but the Troll's return seems by no means so certain.

II.

STEN OF FOGELKÄRR.

In an old Description of Bohuslän the following event is related.—Sten of Fogelkärr was an excellent marksman. One day when out hunting, he came to a mountain, where he saw a young, beautiful girl sitting on a stone; and as he instantly formed the design of obtaining her, he cast his fire-steel between her and the mountain, for that purpose. He then heard a loud laugh within the mountain. It was the damsel's father, who at the same moment opened his door and said: "Wilt thou have my daughter?" Sten answered: "Yes," and as she was stark naked, he wrapped her in his cloak, and so took her home with him, and had her christened. Before, however, he left the mountain, the damsel's father gave him this injunction: "When thou celebratest thy marriage with my daughter, thou shalt send to the mountain in which I dwell twelve barrels of beer, together with bread, and the meat of four oxen; and when the bridal gifts are to be given, mine shall not be wanting." Nobly did the man of the mountain keep his promise; for while the company was sitting at the nuptial board, and the guests, according to ancient custom, were bestowing the bridal presents, the roof was suddenly raised, and a large purse of money thrown down; at the same time was heard the old man's voice: "Here is my

bridal gift, and when thou wilt have thy dower, drive to the mountain with four horses and take thy share." Sten did so, and got copper kettles of various sizes, besides 'brand'-cattle[1], descendants from which good stock were long to be found in those parts. Sten became a rich and influential man, and had many comely children by his wife; even now families exist in the neighbourhood, that profess to derive their descent from Sten of Fogelkärr and the damsel of the mountain[2].

III.

A peasant, in a village named Fyrunga, had in like manner married a giant's daughter, with whom he had received considerable wealth; but he lived unhappily with her, beat and misused her, although she was of a meek and compliant disposition. When the giant was apprized of this, he withdrew from his son-in-law, so that he became poor. This peasant being one day about to shoe his horse, in the absence of other aid, ordered his wife to hold up the horse's feet. With astonishment he saw that she not only lifted up the horse's feet with the utmost ease, but that when a shoe did not fit, she bent it as if it had been wax instead of cold iron. Not without signs of fear the man said to her: "As thou art so strong, why dost thou allow me to strike thee?" "I bear in mind," said she, "what the black man said who united us, that I shall be obedient to thee, and I will hold to my engagement, although thou hast often broken thine; else I could have chopped thee up like cabbage." From that moment the man became so changed through his wife's good sense and forbearance, that he ever after treated her with affection. When apprized of this change, the giant again bestowed

[1] See page 76.

[2] Grimm (D. M. p. 435) gives the story with some variations from Ödman's Bahuslän. The cattle are there distinguished as *white-headed* (hielmeta), O. Nor. hjálmóttr, *vertice albus, alias discolor; de peculibus dicitur.*

on them all sorts of good, so that they became rich and prosperous.

IV.

In the district of Näs in Wärmland there is an immense stone, having in it a cavity like a room, in which the peasant children sit and play while they are out with the cattle. By some it is called Stygges stone, by others Halvar's room. In this hollow, so says the tradition, there dwelt, in the time of heathenism, a giant, who lived on the best terms possible with a farmer in the nearest grange. One day as the farmer and another man came out of the forest from their labour, they found the giant sitting outside of the stone. "Can I barter with thee?" said the giant; "six she-goats and the he-goat seven I will give thee for a cow." The farmer expressed his willingness. On the following morning when the farmer's wife entered the cowhouse, she saw to her surprise that the cow was gone and that there were seven goats in its place. The bargain proved a good one, for they were lucky with the goats. Once when they were out raking in the field they saw before them a great frog big with young. The farmer's wife had pity on the heavy creature and wound a woollen band round its body. In the evening the giant came to the farm requesting the wife to come and loose that which she had bound. The woman followed him to the stone, where she found that the frog was no other than the giant's wife, who had assumed that form. She loosed the band and delivered her. In reward for this service, they desired her to come with a bag, into which the giant poured as much silver money as she could carry. It is further related that one evening, when the people were at work in the field, there came from the giant's habitation such a quantity of cattle and goats that they were forced to leave the field. One Easter eve, the farmer was passing by, when the giant, who was sitting on his stone seat, said

to him: "Wilt thou come in and eat milk porridge with me?" "No," answered the other; "if thou hast more than thou canst eat, keep it till to-morrow." "Thanks," said the giant; "had I known that before, I should now be rich." The giant was never seen afterwards.

When the Trolls and Giants were driven away by the Christians, they took refuge out at sea, on uninhabited rocks and on desert strands, where, according to general tradition, they have in later times been seen by mariners. Some sailors belonging to Bohuslän, when once driven on a desert shore by a storm, found a giant sitting on a stone by a fire. He was old and blind, and rejoiced at hearing the Northmen, because he was himself from their country. He requested one of them to approach and give him his hand, "that I may know," said he, "whether there is yet strength in the hands of the Northmen." The old man being blind, was not sensible that they took a great boat-hook, which they heated in the fire and held out to him. He squeezed the hook as if it had been wax, shook his head and said, "I find the Northmen now have but little strength in their hands compared with those of old."

THE TROLLS CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS.

Of the manner in which the Trolls celebrate Christmas eve there are traditions throughout the whole North. At that time it is not advisable for Christian men to be out. On the heaths Witches and little Trolls ride, one on a wolf, another on a broom or a shovel, to their assemblies, where they dance under their stones. These stones are then raised on pillars, under which the Trolls dance and drink. In the mount are then to be heard mirth and music, dancing and drinking. On Christmas morn, during the time between cock-crowing and daybreak, it is highly dangerous to be abroad.

One Christmas night in the year 1490, as Fru Cissela

Ulftand was sitting in her mansion at Liungby in Scania, a great noise was heard proceeding from the Trolls assembled at the Magle stone, when one of the lady's boldest servants rode out to see what was going on. He found the stone raised, and the Trolls in a noisy whirl dancing under it. A beautiful female stept forth, and presented to the guest a drinking horn and a pipe, requesting him to drink the Troll-king's health and to blow in the pipe. He took the horn and pipe, but at the same instant clapped spurs to his horse, and galloped straight, over rough and smooth, to the mansion. The Trolls followed him in a body with a wild cry of threats and prayers, but the man kept the start, and delivered both horn and pipe into the hands of his mistress. The Trolls promised prosperity and riches to Fru Cissela's race, if she would restore their pipe and horn; but she persisted in keeping them, and they are still preserved at Liungby, as memorials of the wonderful event. The horn is said to be of an unknown mixture of metals with brass ornaments, and the pipe of a horse's leg-bone. The man who stole them from the Trolls died three days after, and the horse on the second day. Liungby mansion has been twice burnt, and the Ulftand family never prospered afterwards. This tradition teaches that Christians should act justly even towards Trolls.

It is also related of some priests, who were riding before daybreak by a mount on a Christmas morning, while the Trolls were at their sports, how a Berg- or Mount-woman came out and offered them drink in metal bowls; and how they cast the drink behind them, but that some drops chanced to fall on the horses' loins and burned the hair off. The bowls they carried away with them, and such are still to be found in several churches, where, it is said, they were formerly used as chalices [1].

This drink, which the Trolls were in the habit of offer-

[1] For more on this subject see 'Danish Traditions.'

ing so liberally, was believed to have the property of obliterating from the memory all the past, and of rendering the guest who partook of it contented with all he met with in the mount.

ORIGIN OF THE NOBLE NAME OF TROLLE.

On the wall of Voxtorp church in Småland there is a painting representing a knight named Herve Ulf, when one Christmas morning he received a drinking horn from a Troll-wife with one hand, while with his sword he struck off her head with the other, kept the horn and rode to church. In remembrance of this deed, the king commanded him to call himself Trolle, and to take a Troll without a head for his armorial bearing. Such is the origin of the noble name of Trolle. This wonderful horn was of three hundred colours, and was first preserved in the cathedral of Wexiö; but when the Danes in 1570 burned Wexiö, the horn was carried to Denmark.

It is said that the Trolls are very prolific, but that their offspring for the most part dies when it thunders; whence the saying: "Were it not for thunder, the Trolls would destroy the world."

THE GIANT'S PATH.

In a large cleft in the mountain of Billingen in West Gothland, called the Jättestig (Giant's Path), it is said there was formerly a way leading far into the mountain, into which a peasant once penetrated, and found a man lying asleep on a large stone. How he came there no one could tell, but every time the bell tolls for prayers in Yglunda church, he turns round and sighs. So he will continue till doomsday.

THE TOMTE, OR SWEDISH NISS.

Two husbandmen dwelt in a village; they had like

arable land, like meadow, like wood and pasture, but the one grew richer and the other poorer from year to year. The one had a house painted red, well tarred, with boarded walls and a sound turf roof; the other's habitation was moss-clad, with bare, rotten walls and a leaky roof. Whence all this difference? Many a one will answer: "The rich man had a *Tomte* in his house." He appears before the master, and, if she is kind to him, before the mistress also. "But what are they like, these propitious little beings?" In magnitude like a child of a twelvemonth old, but with an ancient and sagacious looking face under a little red cap; with a gray, coarse woollen jacket, short breeches, and shoes like those worn by peasant children. He appears at noontide, in summer and autumn, and has generally a straw or an ear of corn, which he drags slowly along, panting at every step, like one under the heaviest burthen. On such an occasion the poor peasant had once laughed at a Tomte, and said: "What difference is there whether thou bringest me that or nothing?" This vexed the little, weary collector, and he transferred himself to the other peasant's abode, who was at that time a poor new beginner. From that day prosperity withdrew itself from him who had despised the diminutive being. But the other man, who esteemed the industrious little Tomte, and took care of the smallest straw or ear, became rich, and cleanliness, order and abundance reigned in his dwelling.

If a stable-man takes care of his horses, speaks kindly to them, feeds them at ten o'clock at night, and again at four in the morning, he has no cause to stand in fear of the Tomte. But the careless one, who maltreats the cattle, curses and swears when he enters the stable, forgets their nightly food, and sleeps till day, must take good care of himself, lest when he steps into the stable he get a buffet

on the ear from the unseen but hard fist of the Tomte, that brings him to a stand on his nose.

It has been believed that the souls of those who in heathen times were slaves, and while the master and his sons were engaged in piracy, had charge of the land and buildings, and were employed in agriculture, are represented in these small, gray beings, as pursuing their former earthly labours until doomsday. There are still many Christians who believe in these Tomt-spirits, and annually make them a kind of offering, or, as they now term it, "give them a reward." This takes place on the day when joy was proclaimed to all the world, and salvation even to the Tomtar—Christmas morning; and consists in some small pieces of coarse, gray woollen cloth, a little tobacco, and a shovelful of earth.

Tomtar are also called Nissar. "For the good Niss," the country folks in Blekinge and other places are wont to say, when out at work in the fields and sitting at their repast, they lay a piece of bread, cheese, etc. under a green turf, whereby they hope to gain his good will.

A peasant in Scania was in the habit of placing food on the stove daily for the Tomtar or Nissar. This came to the knowledge of the priest, who thereupon searched the house, for the sake of convincing its inmates that no Nissar were to be found. "How then does the food disappear every night?" asked the peasant. "That I can tell you," said the priest. "Satan takes it all and collects it in a kettle in hell, in which kettle he hopes to boil your souls to all eternity." From that time no more food was set out for the Nissar.

Where building and carpenters' work are going forward, it is said that the Tomtar, while the workmen are at their dinner, may be seen going about and working with small axes. When a tree is felled in the forest, it is said: "The woodman holds the axe, but the Tomte fells the

tree." When the horses in a stable are well tended and in fine condition, it is said: "The groom lays the food in the crib, but it is the Tomte who makes the horse fat."

A housewife when she sifted meal had long remarked that there was an uncommon weight in the tub, and that although she had frequently taken considerable quantities from it, the weight exceeded all belief. But once, when going to the storeroom, she chanced to look through the keyhole, or through a chink in the door, and beheld a little Tomte in tattered gray clothes sitting and busily sifting in the meal-tub. The woman withdrew softly, and made a new, handsome kirtle for the industrious little fellow, and hung it on the edge of the tub, at the same time placing herself so that she might see what he thought of his new garment. When he came he immediately put it on and began to sift most sedulously; but seeing that the meal dusted and damaged his new kirtle, he exclaimed, casting the sieve from him:

"The young spark is fine;
He dusts himself:
Never more will he sift."

RAVENS.—PYSLINGAR AND MYLINGAR.—SKRAT.

Ravens scream by night in the forest-swamps and wild moors. They are said to be the ghosts of murdered persons, who have been concealed there by their undetected murderers, and not had Christian burial.

In forests and wildernesses the spirits of little children that have been murdered are said to wander about wailing, within an assigned space, as long as their lives would have lasted on earth, if they had been permitted to live. As a terror for unnatural mothers that destroy their offspring, their sad cry is said to be: "Mamma! Mamma!" When

travellers by night pass such places, these beings will hang on the vehicle, when the liveliest horses will toil as if they were dragging millstones, will sweat, and at length be unable to proceed a step further. The peasant then knows that a ghost or Pysling has attached itself to his vehicle. If he goes to the horses' heads, lifts the headstall, and looks through it towards the carriage, he will see the little pitiable being, but will get a smart blow on the ear, or fall sick. This is called *ghost-pressed* (gastkramad).

The Myling, as well as the Tomte and Skogsrå, are exposed to persecution from the wolves. Some hunters, who had one evening taken up their quarters in a barn in the forest, were waked in the middle of the night by the howling of wolves and an extraordinary noise; and on seeking the cause, they saw a Skogsrå fleeing before a number of wolves that were pursuing her. On reaching the barn she jumped up to the little window that stood open, whence she jeered the wolves standing beneath, showing them first one foot then the other, and saying: "Paw this foot! Paw that foot! If you get both, take them." One of the hunters, tired of her proximity, gave her a push in the back, so that she fell down among the wolves, saying: "Take her altogether!" She was instantly devoured by the wolves. Similar stories are related of Mylingar and Tomtar.

Of the Myling it is related that it can assume the form of persons both living and dead, thereby deluding the nightly traveller; also that it can imitate the speech, laugh and singing of persons.

The Skrat[1] is a species of Myling that with a horse-laugh makes game of persons that are out at night in the forests or fields. A peasant in Westmanland had while digging found a ring that shone like gold, and would, as he said, have certainly become possessor of it, had not the

[1] See Grimm, D. M. p. 447.

Skrat, before he had well got hold of it, laughed it away. So it is said frequently to happen to treasure-diggers. He comes at midnight, chiefly in winter, out of the forests, to the public roads, and hangs on the hinder part of a sledge or other vehicle, when on a sudden it becomes so heavy, that the horses, however good they may be, become jaded, sweat, and at length stop; then the Skrat generally runs off with a malicious laugh, and vanishes.

THE WERWOLF.

In a hamlet within a forest there dwelt a cottager, named Lasse, and his wife. One day he went out in the forest to fell a tree, but had forgotten to cross himself and say his Paternoster, so that some Troll or Witch (Vargamor)[1] got power over him and transformed him into a wolf. His wife mourned for him for several years; but one Christmas eve there came a beggar woman, who appeared very poor and ragged: the good housewife gave her a kind reception, as is customary among Christians at that joyous season. At her departure the beggar woman said that the wife might very probably see her husband again, as he was not dead, but was wandering in the forest as a wolf. Towards evening the wife went to her pantry, to place in it a piece of meat for the morrow, when on turning to go out, she perceived a wolf standing, which raising itself with its paws on the pantry steps, regarded the woman with sorrowful and hungry looks. Seeing this she said: "If I knew that thou wert my Lasse, I would give thee a bone of meat." At that instant the wolf-skin fell off, and her husband stood before her in the clothes he had on when he went out on that unlucky morning.

[1] Old women dwelling in the forests, who not unfrequently give themselves out as sorceresses, have got the name of *Vargamor* (Wolf-crones), and are believed to have the wolves of the forest under their protection and control.

The heathen sorcery of transforming a person to the likeness of a wolf, is still believed by many to be transmitted to some wicked individuals, even to our days. Fins, Lapps and Russians are held in particular aversion on this account; and when, during the last year of the war with Russia, Calmar was unusually overrun with wolves, it was generally said that the Russians had transformed the Swedish prisoners to wolves, and sent them home to infest the country.

JACK O' LANTERN.

A flaming light moves backwards and forwards on the hearth, not unlike a lantern borne by one in search of something. It is 'Jack with the lantern,' who, as many a simple person, after old traditions, will tell us, was a mover of landmarks, and is thus doomed to wander with a light in his hand.

According to the old popular belief, a man, who during life has rendered himself guilty of such a crime, is doomed to have no rest in his grave after death, but to rise every midnight, and with a lantern in his hand to proceed to the spot where the landmark had stood which he had fraudulently removed. On reaching the place, he is seized with the same desire which instigated him in his lifetime, when he went forth to remove his neighbour's landmark, and he says as he goes, in a harsh, hoarse voice: "It is right! it is right! it is right!" But on his return, qualms of conscience and anguish seize him, and he then exclaims: "It is wrong! it is wrong! it is wrong!"

THE RAM IN THE GETABERG.

Near Ingelstad, in the district of Oxie, in Scania, there is a mount called the Getaberg, where before misfortunes and public calamities, a ram, terrible to look upon, makes its appearance. The neighbouring peasantry can tell, both with year and day, of calamities that have been so foreboded. One evening a boy passed over the mount singing a song about the ram, that was current in the neighbour-

hood, and by his ill-timed mirth waked the ram, which soon stuck him on his horn, and would have killed him, had not a handsome young damsel come and saved him; for when young girls come to him the ram becomes as gentle as a lamb.

THE DRAGON, OR WHITE SERPENT.

Among the fabulous beings of former days must be reckoned the Dragon, concerning which many traditions and songs are extant. In the heathen Sagas no mention is made of its colour; but in later writings we find it usually designated the White Serpent. This must not be confounded with the white Tomt-serpent (Tomtorm), which in the southern parts is numbered among good domestic sprites, and is gladly fed by the inmates of the house in which it vouchsafes to take up its abode under the flooring. The White Serpent now to be spoken of is very rarely seen, some suppose only every hundred years, and in desert places. Sorceresses were in the habit of seeking for it, and boiling it in their magical compounds, for the attainment of profound knowledge in the secrets of nature; for by insinuating itself, in the innermost parts of the earth, around the roots of rocks and mountains, among the lowest fibres of the trees and plants, it is believed to have imbibed their occult virtues, and to communicate them to the individual by whom it allows itself to be found. If any one finds a White Serpent, he should instantly grasp it by the middle of its body, when it will leave its skin. Only to lick this is thought to strengthen the inward powers of man, so that, without previous instruction, he will know the virtues of plants, earths and stones, how to heal wounds and cure all kinds of diseases. This is called 'To become cunning[1].'

A poor little peasant boy, who had wandered out of his

[1] Att blifva klok.

path, came to a small hut in the forest, in which one of these so-called cunning women and serpent-boilers dwelt. When the boy entered she was not at home; but a large kettle was standing on the fire, in which a white serpent was boiling. The boy was hungry, and seeing bread on a table, and a thick, fat scum in the kettle, which he supposed to arise from boiling meat, he dipped a piece of bread in the kettle and ate it. The old beldam, who now came in, was instantly aware of what had taken place; but feeling convinced that the boy, however he might excel others in wisdom, would not surpass her, and that he could not do any harm to her, suffered him to depart, and accompanied him until he was again in his right path, instructing him on the way how he should apply the wondrous gift he was possessed of.

Of Sven in Bragnum in West Gothland, who was so famous that he was visited by Linnæus, the story goes, that he found a White Serpent, the skin of which he licked, whereby he became cunning (klok), so that he knew the virtues of all kinds of creeping things and plants, which he sedulously collected about Mösseberg and the meadows of Boulom, for the cure of diseases. It is remarkable that he knew beforehand that he should lose his knowledge as soon as he married; so that from the day of his marriage he never would receive a visit from a patient.

The Swedish people ascribe the virtue of certain medicinal springs to *White Serpents*. In 1809 thousands flocked from Halland and West Gothland to the wonder-working Helsjö (a small lake near Rampegärda). It was said that some children on its banks tending cattle had in that year often seen a beautiful young female sitting on its shore, holding in her hand a white serpent, which she showed them. This water-nymph with the serpent appears only every hundred years. Bexell's Halland, quoted by Grimm (D. M. p. 554). See Danish traditions. According to a German story, by eating of a white serpent, a person acquires a knowledge of the language of all animals [1].

[1] Grimm, K. and H. M. No. 17.

THE UNINVITED WEDDING GUESTS.

A farmer in Bahuus was celebrating his daughter's marriage, but scarcely was the table covered and the viands brought in, before all—even before the guests had seated themselves—was eaten up. When the master came in and saw this, he said: "Now Hâle has been here and eaten up all the meat." He then ordered other viands to be brought in, of which the company began immediately to partake; but whatever the guests might eat, it was evident that more vanished than was consumed by them. Near the door stood an old cavalry soldier, who knew more than the others, and who, on hearing what was being talked of at table, mounted his horse and rode to a neighbouring mount, where he knocked. On the mountain being opened, the soldier said to its inhabitant: "Lend me thy hat; thou shalt have mine in the mean time." Such a hat was called an *uddehat*, and made the person that wore it invisible. The old man of the mount answered: "Thou shalt have it; but thou must promise me to return it before sunset." No sooner said than done. The old soldier now hastened back to the wedding party, where he saw that by the side of every guest there sat two Trolls, who helped themselves from the dishes with both hands and ate to their hearts' content. Grasping his whip, he lashed the spunging intruders so smartly over the fingers, that they lost all inclination to make further havoc among the dishes, and turned them head over heels out of the apartment. Then taking off the borrowed hat, which had till then made him invisible to the company, he said: "Till this moment the fiend has been feasting with you; but now set more meat on the table, and I will bear you company." They did so, ate in peace, and had a quantity over. When evening approached, the old man remounted his horse and rode to the mount, where he cast down his

borrowed hat and hastened away with all possible speed; and had scarcely turned his horse, before a multitude of Trolls came running, and even got hold of the horse's tail, as he rode over a bridge: but the horse was strong and active, so that the rider escaped, and the Trolls returned to whence they came [1].

OF LUND CATHEDRAL [2].

The cathedral of Lund was regarded as a miracle of Gothic architecture, with respect both to its magnitude and decorations, which monuments of an early age are for the most part still preserved. The giant Finn is said to have built it, and his effigy with those of his wife and child are yet to be seen in the undercroft, concerning whom there is the following legend. The holy St. Lawrence (or Lars), when walking among the mountains and forests, and thinking how he could raise a spacious temple worthy of the Lord, was met by a huge giant from a mountain, who engaged to accomplish his wish, but on condition of receiving as a remuneration the sun and moon and both St. Lawrence's eyes. The time, however, fixed for the completion of the work was so short, that the undertaking seemed impracticable. But the holy man soon saw the building drawing too near its completion, and the day approaching when the Troll should come and demand his reward. He now again went wandering about sad and sorrowful in the mountains and forests, when he one day

[1] Faye, p. 30. The old soldier's horse was more fortunate than Tam o'Shanter's Maggie, which at

"Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain grey tail."

[2] Lund, a famous city and university in Skania (Skåne), with a noble old cathedral. It is called the Canterbury of the North, and before the cession of the province by Denmark to Sweden in 1658 was the metropolitan see of the former kingdom. It lies nearly opposite to Copenhagen.

suddenly heard a child crying in the mountain, and the mother, a giantess, singing to appease it :

> " Hush, my babe, hush !
> Thy father, Finn, comes home to-morrow ;
> Then shalt thou play with sun and moon,
> And with St. Lars' two eyes."

St. Lawrence now knew the giant's name, and so had power over him. When the Trolls were aware of this, they both came down into the undercroft, where each seized a pillar, with the intention of throwing down the whole edifice ; but St. Lawrence, making the sign of the cross, cried out : " Stand there in stone till doomsday ! " They instantly became stone as they are yet to be seen ; the giant embracing one pillar, and his wife, with a child on her arm, another [1].

THE CHURCH-GRIM AND THE CHURCH-LAMB.

Heathen superstition did not fail to show itself in the construction of Christian churches. In laying the foundation, the people would retain something of their former religion, and sacrificed to their old deities, whom they could not forget, some animal, which they buried alive, either under the foundation or without the wall. The spectre of this animal is said to wander about the churchyard by night, and is called the Kyrkogrim, or Church-grim.

A tradition has also been preserved, that under the altar in the first Christian churches a lamb was usually buried, which imparted security and duration to the edifice. This is an emblem of the genuine Church-lamb, the Saviour of the world, who is the sacred corner-stone of his church and congregation. When any one enters a church at a

[1] See the story of King Olaf, p. 39, and of Esbern Snare and Kallundborg church in Danish Traditions. The original is manifestly the Eddaic story of the builder that engaged to fortify Asgard.

time when there is no service, he may chance to see a little lamb spring across the quire and vanish. That is the Church-lamb. When it appears to a person in the churchyard, particularly to the gravediggers, it is said to forebode the death of a child that shall be next laid in the earth.

HELIGE THOR'S KÄLLA (WELL).

From the time of heathenism there is a well in Småland, in the parish of Skatelöf, which is remarkable for a deplorable event. On the spot where the well now is, a young damsel, it is said, met her lover, and from some suspicion of his infidelity, murdered him. The god Thor caused the well to spring up from his blood. In consequence of the change that the heathen religion underwent in the minds of the people, the name of the god Thor became altered to 'Helige Thor' (Saint Thor), the festival of our Saviour's Ascension was called 'Helig Thor's-dag' (Holy Thursday), and Skatelöfs Källa was named 'Helige Thor's Källe.' From ancient documents it appears that a particular song was formerly sung in the neighbourhood of this well, when the country folks, every Holy Thursday eve, assembled there to play and make offerings.

OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

All that is most beautiful and glorious in the creation was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, memorials of which exist even at the present day. One of the earliest and fairest flowers of spring was, and in many places still is, called *Our Lady's bunch of keys* (primula veris; common cowslip); the galium verum luteum is *Our Lady's bedstraw*[1]; a very green grass, with flowers of a more beau-

[1] N. Poussin has painted this plant, instead of straw, under the infant Jesus in the manger, with its bright yellow flowers gilded, as it were, by the rays emanating from the child.

tiful blue than those of the common flax, is *Our Lady's flax*; in low, wild places a flower called *Our Lady's hand* lifts its rose-coloured spike: it has two roots like hands, one white the other black, and when both are laid in water, the black one will sink—this is called *Satan's hand*; but the white one—called *Mary's hand*—will float. This plant the peasant shows to his children, and tells of the holy mother and of Him who overcame the powers of hell. The pretty, small green seed-vessels of the shepherd's purse (thlaspi bursa pastoris) are called *Our Lady's pincushion*; and the dew-flower (alchemilla vulgaris) with its plaited leaves, *Our Lady's mantle*.

As the Thorbagge[1], in the time of heathenism, was sacred to Thor, so was the Lady-bird (coccinella septempunctata) dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and is to this day called *Our Lady's key-maid* (nyckelpiga). It is thought lucky when a young girl in the country sees this little creature in the spring; she then lets it creep about her hand, and says: "She measures me for wedding gloves." And when it spreads its little wings and flies away, she particularly notices the direction it takes, for thence her sweetheart shall one day come. This little messenger from the Virgin Mary is believed to foretell to the husbandman whether the year shall be a plentiful one or the contrary: if its spots exceed seven, bread-corn will be dear; if they are fewer than seven, there will be an abundant harvest and low prices.

YULE-STRAW.

It was a custom in many places to carry Yule-straw (Julhalm) into the fields, in the belief that it would be of avail in bringing forth an abundant harvest, for the sake of the Child, through whom come all grace and blessings. It is in remembrance of the Virgin Mary, who laid the

[1] See page 53.

Saviour of the world on hay and straw; therefore all little children may well play and rejoice in the Yule-straw, the infant Jesus having celebrated Yule on a bed of straw.

It is also said, that of the Yule-straw (as of the Yule-hog, or loaf)[1] a part should be preserved and given to the draught horses and other cattle in the spring, to preserve them against sickness and mishaps, and to keep them together, so that they shall not be dispersed, although they should go to graze on large heaths or in forests.

In some places it is the custom to make a so-called fraternal bed (syster-säng) on the floor, in which the children and domestics sleep together on Yule-straw. On this night all the shoes must be put in one place close together, in order that all may live in harmony throughout the coming year. Great is the virtue of Yule-straw. To the nests of the fowls and geese, in which it is laid, no martens nor any witchcraft dare approach; strewn on the earth it promotes the growth of fruits and corn. If given to the cows before they are driven to their summer pasture, it secures them against distempers, and prevents them from separating.

THE BJÄRAAN, OR BARE.

This was a milk-pail composed of nine kinds of stolen weaver's knots. Three drops of blood from the little finger were to be dropt into it, and the following formula uttered:

Pá jorden skal tu för mig springa,	On earth shalt thou before me spring,
I Blåkulla skal jag för thig brinna!	In Blakulla shall I for thee burn!

Blåkulla (the Blue mountain) is the Swedish Blocksberg, a rock between Småland and Öland[2].

[1] See p. 50. A part of this was given to the household, that they might live together in harmony.

[2] Grimm, D. M. pp. 1004, 1044.

MIDSUMMER EVE.

On St. John's eve they gather and bind together all sorts of flowers and plants, which they call Midsommarsqvastar (midsummer-posies). These are hung up in every house, particularly in the stables, the cattle then cannot be bewitched. The St. John's wort (hypericum) must be among the rest, as possessing extraordinary virtue. On St. John's eve much may happen, and much be foreseen of importance for a person's remaining life. Some then mount, under white blankets, up on the roof, and lie down to listen and see; whatever words they then by chance may hear, or whatever face they may see, will have a meaning, which must be interpreted. Whoever, braving all risk of annoyance from witches and spirits of the night, will look more boldly into futurity, proceeds to a spot where three ways diverge, and there awaits what may happen or suggest itself as prophecy or warning. But what shall the love-sick do? The forest is lonely, and the gathering of plants in remote places, on mountains and in crossways, is too formidable. But it is to the solitary only that the divinities appear with the keys of futurity. The oppressed heart has, nevertheless, a resource. Thoughtful the sufferer goes forth, entwines wreaths of nine sorts of flowers, and lays them under his, or her, pillow. How many then are the sweet thoughts and wishes! How slowly comes the light sleep! At length it is there, and with it the desired dreams, and whatever they whisper over such flowers will prove true.

The witch-crew also may at this joyous season be constrained and seen. Witches' butter is to be found both on the corn and on flowers, and is either an exudation from the plants, or what is usually called honey-dew, and the production of some insect. This the wanton forest-sprites, or old witches are said to spread abroad. If nine kinds of wood be formed into a pile and kindled, and some

of this witches' butter be cast into it; or if the fire be only beaten with nine kinds of wood, those who have justly been suspected as witches must come and discover themselves[1].

CHRISTMAS.

At Christmas it was formerly the custom to set little bowls of Yule-porridge (Julgröt) and other eatables on the barn-floor, together with a jacket, for the Tomtegubbe, in order that he might continue to bring prosperity to the house[2].

Another old custom, but now obsolete, it was, to go on Christmas night, in the morning twilight, into a wood or forest, without uttering a word or letting a sound be heard, without looking around, without eating or drinking, or seeing any fire, or hearing a cock crow. If any one so qualified goes on the path leading to the church as the sun is rising, he will see as many funerals as will pass that way during the ensuing year; and see how the produce will be in the meadows and pastures, and whether any fires will break out, within the same period[3].

THE CUCKOO.

When the cuckoo is first heard in spring-tide, it is a custom in Sweden to ask him "How many years shall I live?" or, "When will this or that happen?" Such inquiries are comprised in the following rimes, which are uttered line by line, on every cry of the bird:—

Göker grå, *cantat cucullus* Gucku.	Cuckoo grey,
Sæg mig då, ... Gucku.	Tell me now,
Uppå qvist, ... Gucku.	Up on bough,
Sant och vist, ... Gucku.	True and sure,
Hur många år ..... Gucku.	How many years
Jag leva får? *or*, ... Gucku.	I have to live? *or*,
Jag ogift går?	I shall unmarried go?

[1] Arndt, iii. pp. 73 *sqq.* [2] Ib. p. 84. [3] Ib. p. 86.

As many times as he repeats his note so many years will the person live, or pass in single blessedness. But the maidens are wary and provident withal. That he may not afflict them by declaring too many years of maidenhood, they have established the rule that ten is the highest number he may lawfully cry. If he cries oftener than ten times, they say he sits on a bewitched bough (på galen qvist), and give no heed to his prediction.

Much depends on the quarter whence the note of the cuckoo is first heard. If heard from the north, the year will be one of sorrow; if from the west or east, one of prosperity; if from the south, it will be a good butter year; or a year of death, according to another account[1].

SWEDISH POPULAR BELIEF[2].

1. Be careful not to meet with sweepings in the doorway, if you wish to be married in the same year.

2. If a maiden and a youth eat of one and the same beet-root, they will fall in love with each other.

3. If on midsummer night nine kinds of flowers are laid under the head, a youth or maiden will dream of his or her sweetheart.

4. A youth may not give a knife or pins to a girl, because they sever love.

5. A girl must not look in a looking-glass after dark, nor by candle-light, lest she lose the good will of the other sex.

6. A bride must endeavour to see her bridegroom before he sees her; she will then have the mastery.

7. She must, for the same reason, during the marriage ceremony, place her foot before his.

8. For the same reason, she must take care to sit down first in the bridal chair.

[1] Thiele, iii. 108 *sq.* edit. 1820. Grimm, D. M. pp. 640 *sq.*

[2] Grimm, D. M. Anhang, p. cviii. edit. 1835.

9. For the same reason, she must, as if by accident, let her shoe slip off, or her handkerchief, or anything else fall on the floor, which the bridegroom from politeness will stoop to pick up. It will then be his lot to submit (*lit.* to bend his back) during the whole continuance of their marriage.

10. The bride must stand near to the bridegroom, that no one thenceforward may press between them.

11. In the church let them hold a riband or napkin between them, that they may live solely for each other.

13. The bride shall touch with so many fingers on her naked body, while sitting in the bridal chair, as she desires to have children.

14. That she may have an abundance of milk, let her mother meet her, when she comes home from church, with a glass of milk to drink.

15. As food in her first confinement, let her provide herself with a cake and a cheese, which she should have lying by her in the bridal bed.

16. When children are newly born, a book is to be placed under their head, that they may be quick at reading.

17. When they are bathed for the first time, let money be put into the water, that they may become rich. A purse with money in it should also be sewed round their neck.

18. A part of the father's clothes should be laid on a female child, and the mother's petticoat on a male child; to find favour with the opposite sex.

19. The mother should meet the child at the door, when it is carried out to be christened; but when it is carried home after it is baptized, it should be met at the door with a loaf, that it may never want bread.

20. As long as a child remains unnamed, the fire must not be extinguished.

21. No one may pass between the fire and a sucking babe.

22. Water may not be brought in late where there is a sucking child, without throwing fire into it.

23. No one that enters a house may take a child in his hands, without previously having touched fire.

24. When a child gets teeth early, other children may be expected soon after.

25. An empty cradle must not be rocked, the child will else be given to crying and noisy.

26. If a first-born child, that is born with teeth, bites a whitlow, it will be cured.

27. A child may not read and eat at the same time, else it will get a dull memory.

28. A child should first touch a dog, but not a cat.

29. If a child plays with fire, it will with difficulty retain its water.

30. A child may not creep through a window, nor may any one step over a child, or walk round a child that is sitting on the floor or is in a carriage; for then, it is believed, it will never grow bigger than it is.

31. If a sick person gets strange food, he becomes well.

32. If thanks are given for a remedy (medicine), it will have no effect.

33. If a person walks over graves with an open sore, it will heal either very slowly or never.

34. One must not mention before morning whether one has seen a spectre, lest one be pressed [1] and spit blood.

35. After dark one must not go by water, for fear of getting a whitlow.

36. For the same reason, or also that one may not be pressed, one should spit thrice in crossing the water after dark.

[1] Qu. by the night-mare?

37. For the sick one ought to cause prayers to be said in three churches, one of which should be an offering-church, if there be one near. It will then speedily be decided whether the sick is to recover or die.

38. The teeth of large fish should be burnt, in order to be lucky in fishing.

39. One ought to tell no one when one goes out to fish, and not mention whether one has caught many or few.

40. Nor should any stranger see how many fish one has taken.

41. When one rows out from land to fish, one must not turn the boat against the sun.

42. Pins found in a church and made into fish-hooks catch the best.

43. If a woman passes over the rod, no fish will bite.

44. Stolen fishing tackle is lucky, but the person robbed loses his luck.

45. A light must not be held under the table, lest the guests should fall out.

46. One should not turn round when going on any business, that it may not turn out ill.

47. One must not return thanks for pins.

48. There must be no spinning on a Thursday evening, or in Passion week; for else there will be spinning in the night.

49. If a stranger comes in where a pudding (sausage) is being boiled, it will split asunder.

50. If you turn your slippers or shoes with the toes towards the bed, the mara will come in the night.

51. On Easter-eve a cross should be made over the door of the cattle-house, against harm from witches.

52. When you sleep for the first time in a house, you should count the beams; then what you dream will come to pass.

53. If a person forgets something when setting out on a journey, there is good hope of his safe return ; but to look behind is not a good sign.

54. When cats wash themselves, or magpies chatter near the house, they expect strangers. If a slothful housewife, or a careless servant, has not already swept the floor, it ought forthwith to be done.

55. The person that comes first home from church on Christmas day, will be the first to die.

56. If a person walks thrice round a bed of cabbages, after having planted them, they will continue free from worms.

57. An empty sack must never be carried untied. If a pregnant woman follows it, her child will never be satisfied with food.

58. When you bathe, be careful to put steel in the water to bind the Neck, and cry, "Neck, Neck, steel in strand, thy father was a steel-thief, thy mother was a needle-thief; so far shalt thou be hence as this cry is heard." Then let all cry as loud as they can, "ho hagla[1]."

59. On Easter-saturday, a long horn (lur) is to be blown through the window of the cattle-house: so far as the sound is heard, so far away will beasts of prey continue during that year.

60. If a person seeking cattle in the forest meets with a titmouse on his right hand, the cattle sought for will be found.

61. If swine are let out on St. Lucius' day, they get vermin.

62. If the cattle, on Michaelmas eve, are driven in without noise, they will be quiet in the cattle-house the whole year.

63. All labour when completed is to be signed with the cross.

[1] See p. 82.

64. If a grain of corn is found under the table in sweeping on a new year's morn, there will be an abundant crop that year.

65. If a suspicious female enters the yard, to counteract the effects of witchcraft, you must either strike her so that the blood runs, or cast a firebrand after her.

66. When a bride comes from church, she must herself unharness or unsaddle the horse, that she may easily have children.

67. If a bride dances with money in her shoes, no witchery can affect her.

68. In Sweden, as well as in Norway and Finland, the belief is general that when wolves appear in great multitudes it forebodes war. The same superstition prevails also with regard to squirrels[1].

[1] Afzelius, i. 172.

SCANDINAVIAN POPULAR TRADITIONS.

III.

DANISH TRADITIONS [1].

TROLLS.

BARROW- OR MOUNT-FOLK, ELF-FOLK AND DWARFS.

ORIGIN OF TROLLS.

I.

THE people in Jutland relate, that when our Lord cast the fallen angels out of heaven, some of them fell down on the mounds or barrows and became *Barrow-folk*, or, as they are also called, *Mount-folk, Hill-folk*; others fell into the elf-moors, who were the progenitors of the *Elf-folk*; while others fell into dwellings, from whom descend the domestic sprites or *Nisser*.

II.

While Eve was one day washing her children by a spring, our Lord unexpectedly appeared before her, whereat she was terrified, and concealed those of her children that

[1] From Danmark's Folkesagn samlede af J. M. Thiele, 2 Bd. Kiöbenhavn, 1843.

were not yet washed. Our Lord asked her if all her children were there; she answered 'yes,' to avoid his anger, if he should see that they were not all washed. Then said our Lord, that what she had concealed from him should thenceforth be concealed from mankind; and at the same moment the unclean children disappeared and were concealed in the hills. From these descend all the underground folk.

In a rabbinic tradition it is said, that after Adam had eaten of the tree of knowledge he was accursed for a hundred and thirty years. During all these years, as we are informed by Rabbi Jeremias ben Elieser, he procreated only *schedim*, i. e. demons and the like.

ELF-FOLK.

The Elf-folk dwell in the Elf-moors. The male appears as an old man with a broad-brimmed hat; the female Elf is young and seducing in appearance, but behind she is as hollow as a dough-trough. Young men should be particularly on their guard against her, for it is difficult to withstand her, and she has besides a stringed instrument, when she touches which she infatuates every heart. The male is often to be seen by the Elf-moors basking in the sunbeams; but if any one approach him too near, he will stretch his jaws and blow on them, which causes sickness and pestilence [1]. The females are most frequently to be seen in the moonlight, when they dance their circling dance in the high grass with such lightness and grace, that they seldom get a refusal, when they offer a young man their hand. Good care must be taken to prevent cattle from grazing where the Elf-folk have been; for if an animal come on a place where they have either spat or done worse, it will be seized with grievous complaints, which can be remedied only by giving them to eat a handful of St.

[1] That the blast of the elves is dangerous, is also a popular belief in Scotland.

John's wort, gathered on St. John's night at twelve o'clock. It may also happen that they receive injury by mingling with the Elf-folk's cattle, which are particularly large and of a blue colour. Such are sometimes to be seen in the fields licking the dew from the grass, for it is on that they live. The peasant may, however, provide against the evils above-mentioned, if, before he lets his cattle loose, he goes to the Elf-barrow and says: "Thou little Troll! may I graze my cows on thy mount?" If he gets no refusal, he may feel easy.

Between Terslöse and Sobierg lies Sobierg-Banke, which is the richest barrow in all Seeland; it is in fact impossible to tell the precious things to be found there. In this hill there dwells a Troll-wife, to whom there was once a grand procession from Steenlille field, when the Troll in Galtebierg took her to wife.

It often happens, in fine weather, that the passer-by sees the most beautiful copper utensils and choicest beddings lying on the mound to be aired; and on approaching still nearer, he may see the young Elflings labouring to get them all in with the utmost speed.

In Illerup field near Kallundborg there is a mount called Fibierg-Bakke, in which there is a vast number of Trolls, who have much property and gold there. It may be plainly seen that they have a hole in the mount through which they drag those on whom they seize. At Yule one may see how they bring out their silver and gold to sun it, at which time it is dangerous to go on the mount. But on St. John's night the entire mount is set on red pillars, and then dancing and merry-making may be seen there. At this time any one may approach, and may also see how they drag great chests full of money backwards and forwards.

In Laanehöi on Ærö the Troll-folk may frequently be heard slamming their coffer-lids. Some harvest-people once sitting on the mount at their repast, heard, by placing their ear to the earth, that they were grinding corn in it.

That Mount-folk formerly dwelt in Gallehöi on Ærö there can hardly be entertained a doubt; for not only have people heard them slam their coffer-lids, but the smith in Lille-Rise, who in the war time kept watch there, heard every morning a clock strike five in the mount.

Near Östrel, between Aalborg and Thisted, there is a mount, in which there dwells an elfin smith. At night one may plainly hear that smith's work is going on there; and in the side of the mount there is a hole, by which in the morning slag and flakes of iron may be found.

In the neighbourhood of Sundby, on the isle of Mors, there is a mount inhabited by a Troll who is a smith. At night one may hear when he is at work. Opposite to this mount there is a sand-hill, where the same smith has another workshop, whence may be heard the strokes of ponderous hammers. At midnight he often rides through the air from one workshop to the other, on a horse without a head, with hammer in hand, followed by all his apprentices and journeymen.

In the parish of Buur there are three large mounts. In one of them dwells a Troll who is a smith and has his workshop there. At night fire may frequently be seen issuing from the top of the mount, and, singular enough,

entering again at the side; but it is by that means he keeps his iron hot. If any one is desirous of having a piece of iron forged, he needs only to lay it on the mount, together with a silver skilling, at the same time saying what he wishes done, and the next morning the skilling will have disappeared, and the piece of work desired will lie ready and well executed[1].

Once some of the country people of Buur determined to dig up this Troll's treasure; for which purpose they one night assembled with spades and pickaxes. After all had been informed that they must beware of uttering even a single word, however strongly they might be tempted, they set to work. But scarcely had they put a spade in the ground before all sorts of frightful sights came out of the mount. Still they dug on unconcerned in the most perfect silence, until they arrived at a spacious stone apartment. There lay the treasure before them, to wit, a large copper kettle full of gold money, close by which was an enormous black dog asleep. One of the men then taking off his coat, laid the dog gently upon it, for the purpose of carrying him away. At this moment came a great load of hay out of the mount, drawn by two cocks, which drew their load thrice round the mount; still no one uttered a syllable, until one of the cocks kicked out behind with such force that he broke the thick pole of the wagon, at which one of the men exclaimed: "That was a deuce of a kick for a cock!" But scarcely had he said the words when all the men, many as they were, were projected to a considerable distance out of the mount, which was instantly closed again. On making a second experiment, it seemed to them that the whole Öster-Buur was in flames, at which sight, casting away their

[1] The Wayland smith of Kenilworth.

spades, they ran to their several homes; but on reaching the village they found all safe and quiet.

In these goblin smiths may evidently be recognised the descendants of the dwarfs of the Eddaic mythology.

At Gamtofte, not far from Assens, there is a mound in a field in which a Troll is said to have taken up his abode. Of this Troll it is related that he is very obliging when persons wish to borrow anything; on which occasion it is simply necessary to go to the mount and knock thrice on the north side, at the same time naming the things required, whether pots, pans or other domestic utensils, when they instantly get what they need, but may be reckoned as dead, if they do not return them at the time fixed.

On the isle of Möen[1] there is a mount called Östed-Höi. Once when Margaret Skælvigs was passing it on her way to Elmelund castle, an old woman met her and asked: "Whither art thou going, my child?" Margaret answered that she was on her way to Elmelund castle, to borrow a gown of Peter Munk's wife, to be married in. Then said the old woman: "If thou wilt be here on Saturday, I will lend thee a bridal dress." On the Saturday following Margaret went accordingly to Östed-Höi, and the woman brought her beautiful clothes of gold embroidery, ordering her to bring them back in a week; if then no one appeared to receive them, she might consider them her own property. Thus did Margaret Skælvigs appear as a bride in clothes of gold embroidery; and when she took them back at the time appointed, no one was

[1] One of the Danish islands, lying close to the most southern point of Seeland.

there to receive them, so she rightfully kept them as her own.

In Thyholm there is a series of lofty mounts which were formerly inhabited by the Mount-folk. A peasant once passing them on his way to Vestervig market, happened at the moment to utter complaints that he was mounted on such a sorry jade. On his way back, he saw lying precisely on the spot where he had sent forth his lamentations, four horseshoes, which he took home and shod his horse with them. But from that time no other horse in the neighbourhood could go with such speed as his.

Another time, some peasants, who were passing by the mounts, by way of joke prayed the Mount-folk to give them some good beer. At the moment a little Troll came out of the mount with a large silver can, which he held out to the men, one of whom had no sooner got it in his grasp, than he set spurs to his horse, with the intention of keeping it. But the little man of the mount being quicker than he, soon overtook him and compelled him to give back the can.

At length these Mount-folk grew weary of their abode in Thyland, and one day departed in a body to the ferry, for the purpose of crossing the fiord. When the ferryman was to be paid, they threw something into his hat which burned through it and sank under the floor, and which must have been gold; for otherwise it would be impossible to account for the comfort which afterwards prevailed in the ferry-house.

A little Elf-girl once came to a man in Dunkiær on the isle of Ærö with a peel, the handle of which was loose, begging him to fasten it, which he refused to do. Where-

upon a lad, who was standing by, undertook to assist her, and in reward for his service found lying by his plate at dinner-time a dainty slice of fine bread with butter on it. The man, who well knew whence the present came, advised him not to eat it, saying it would cause his death; but the lad ate it without fear, and was well and cheerful when he rose the following morning; but the man lay stone-dead in his bed.

In the neighbourhood of Lynge, near Sorö, there is a mount called Bodedys, not far from which dwelt an aged peasant that had an only son, who made long voyages. For a considerable time the father had received no tidings of his son, and thinking that he had perished, mourned for his loss. One evening as he was passing by Bodedys with a full load, the mount opened and the Troll came out, who desired him to drive in. At this the man felt somewhat disconcerted, but knowing that it would not turn to his profit if he refused compliance with the will of the Troll, he turned his horses and drove into the mount. There the Troll began to deal with him, and paid him liberally for all his wares. When he had unloaded his wagon and was about to drive out, the Troll said: "If thou canst keep thy mouth shut with regard to what has taken place, I shall look to thy advantage hereafter; and if thou wilt come again to-morrow, thou shalt find thy son here." At the first moment the man knew not what to answer, but believing that the Troll was able to keep his promise, he felt extremely glad, and at the time fixed returned to Bodedys. There he sat waiting for a considerable time, and at length fell asleep. When he awoke his son was lying by his side, and both father and son found it no easy matter to say how all this had come to pass. The son now related how he had been in prison and

there suffered great hardships; but that one night he had dreamed that a man came to him and said: "Dost thou still hold thy father dear?" and on his answering "Yes," it was as if all chains and walls were broken. During this narrative happening to raise his hand to his neck, he found that a piece of the iron chain still remained there. At this they were struck dumb with amazement, and went to Lynge, where they hung the piece of chain up in the church as a memorial.

Not far from Sorö is the village of Pedersborg, a little beyond which is another called Lynge. Between these two places there is a mount called Bröndhöi, which is said to be inhabited by Troll-folk. Among these there was an old jealous Troll, on whom the others had bestowed the name of Knurremurre; because through him there was often dissension and ill-feeling in the mount. It once reached the ears of this old Knurremurre that there was too close an intimacy between his young wife and a young Troll, which the old Troll took so much amiss that he threatened the life of the other, who consequently deemed it advisable to flee from the mount, and betake himself, transformed into a yellow cat, to the village of Lynge, under which form he ingratiated himself with a poor housekeeper named Platt. With him he lived a considerable time, got milk and porridge every day, and lay from morning till night in the easy-chair behind the stove. One evening Platt came home just as puss in his usual place was lapping some porridge and licking the pot. "Well, mother," said the man, "I will now tell thee what happened to me on my way home. As I was passing by Bröndhöi, a Troll came out and called to me, saying: 'Holla you, Platt! tell your cat that Knurremurre is dead.'" At these words the cat rose on his hind legs, let the pot roll and said,

while stealing out at the door: "What? is Knurremurre dead? I must then hasten home."

THE KLINT-KING ON THE ISLE OF MÖEN.

There is a Klint-king who rules over the klints (cliffs) of Möen, Stevn[1] and Rügen. He has a curious chariot, drawn by four black horses, in which he rides from one klint to another, over the sea, which then becomes agitated. On these occasions the neighing of the horses may be distinctly heard.

By the 'Queen's chair' on Möen's Klint, there are some caverns high up in the rock, where in former times dwelt the Jöde[2] of Upsala. A foolhardy person, it is said, once undertook to visit him in his abode, and suffered himself to be let down by a rope, but he never appeared again.

Sometimes the said Jöde of Upsala may be seen driving over the sea with his black horses; and in the last Swedish war he passed with his green hunters over the rocks, for the purpose of defending the land, which he has promised to do once more. It is said that he has now betaken himself to Stevn's Klint.

Not far from the Queen's chair there is a falling in the cliff, which is called the Orchard fall. There he had a beautiful orchard. To this Jöde, or Giant, of Upsala the peasants of Möen were, until a few years since, in the habit of giving the last sheaf, when they had housed their corn.

In Möen's Klint there are said to be two caverns, in one of which dwells 'Jon Opsal' himself, in the other his dog and white horse.

[1] A remarkable cliff on the east side of Seeland.

[2] Jöde, i. e. *Jeat*, but no doubt a corruption for Jötu, *giant*. The white horse and his denomination *of Upsala* manifestly identify him with Odin.

Twice already he has ridden the 'king's ride,' and saved the land from danger, and he will now soon ride a third time. He will then transform all the stones on the beach to cavalry, and with them overcome the foes of the country. Sometimes he rides to Stevn's Klint, and visits the king there.

It is not long since that he came riding through Busserup, and stopt before the house of an old woman, of whom he begged a drink of water for himself and his white horse. The old woman told him she had only a sieve to give him the water in. "It's no matter," said he, "only fill it." And the sieve held the water, so that both he and his horse could drink from it.

THE UNDERGROUND FOLK IN BORNHOLM[1].

In Bornholm, particularly in foggy weather, the Underground folk are sometimes to be seen on the sides of the heaths practising the use of arms. They have a captain who is called the Ellestinger, and who, as well as all the other chieftains in this army, rides on a horse that has only three legs. These troops, as far as it is possible to discern, are clad in light blue or steel-gray uniforms, and have red caps, though sometimes three-cornered hats. The sound of their drums is often to be heard, and small, round stones are sometimes found, which are said to be their bullets. Whenever any hostile power has threatened Bornholm, these subterraneans have always made their appearance, fully prepared to defend the country; so that the enemy, at such a formidable spectacle, has frequently retired with all possible speed.

Thus it happened on the 6th Feb. in the year 1645, when two Swedish ships of war appeared off the 'Hammer,' with the intention of effecting a landing, that they

[1] A small island, belonging to Denmark, in the Baltic, to the north-east of Rügen.

saw the whole mountain covered with troops swarming forth from every side, and although there were but two companies of soldiers on the island, the enemy was led to believe that the place was so strongly defended, that it would be vain to attempt a landing, and withdrew accordingly.

In the parish of Ulvsborg there is a high mount, in which dwells a Troll, whom many persons have seen, when in the night he has all his bright copper utensils out in the moonlight. This Troll once came to a woman and requested her to lend him a loaf, promising to bring her another in two days; but the woman made him a present of the loaf. Then said the Troll: "Thou shalt not have given me this for nothing; from this day forwards all shall go well with thee; and thy race shall share the benefit until the fourth generation." And so it proved.

THE MOUNT FOLK BORROW BEER.

At Holmby near Aarhuus, as a woman was standing at her door, there came to her a little Troll with a peaked hump, who said: "To-day Store-Bierg is to be married to Lille-Bierg: if mother will be so good as lend us a cask of beer for a few days, she shall have it back equally strong and good." Hereupon the woman followed the Troll to the brewhouse, and desired him to take whichever cask he liked best; but as there was a cross marked on all of them, the Troll was unable to take one, but only pointed and said: "Cross off!" The woman now understood that she must first remove the cross; and when she had so done, the little Troll took the largest cask upon his hump and walked off with it. On the third day he came again, bringing with him a cask of beer equally good with that which he had borrowed. From that time prosperity prevailed in the house.

THE ELF-FOLK UNDER THE HEARTH.

In a mansion in Lille-Rise, on the isle of Ærö, the Elf-folk dwell under the stove. A little Elf-girl once came to the mistress of the house, begging the loan of a pair of scissors, to cut out her bridal dress with. When the woman heard that there was to be a wedding, she felt a wish to be present, and promised to lend her the scissors, provided she would let her see what took place at the wedding. The girl directed the woman to peep through a crack in the hearth, but at the same time cautioned her against laughing; for if she laughed the whole spectacle would vanish before her eyes.

When the wedding-day arrived the woman went to the crack and peeped in, and there saw the entire festivity, how the Elf-folk sat at table in their best clothes and enjoyed the beer and eatables. At this moment it happened that a quarrel arose between two of the guests, which proceeded so far that they both sprang on the table. There they pulled each other's hair, and at length fell into the soup-bowl, out of which they crept quite crest-fallen. As the whole company laughed at the two heroes in the soup-bowl, the woman could not refrain from doing the like; when at the same moment the whole vanished.

These same Elf-folk were at one time so offended with two girls that served in the house, that they took them out of their bed and carried them to a remote apartment, where after much search they were found in a deep sleep, though it was long past noon.

FRU METTE[1].

On the isle of Mors in Jutland there is a mansion called Overgaard, in which there once dwelt a lady named

[1] Females of the higher classes are styled *Frue* (Ger. Frau), while those of an inferior grade, as merchants' and tradesmen's wives, are called *Madame*.

Fru Mette. To this lady a little Troll one day came, saying: "Fru Mette of Overgaard! wilt thou lend thy silken skirt to Fru Mette of Undergaard, to be married in?" Having lent the skirt and waited a long time in vain for its return, she went one day to the mount, and cried: "Give me back my skirt." At this the Troll came out and gave her the skirt quite covered with drippings of wax, and said: "As you have demanded it, take it; but if you had waited a few days, there should have been a diamond in the place of every drop of wax."

THE UNDERGROUND FOLK FETCH A MIDWIFE.

One Christmas eve, as a woman was preparing meat for the family, an Elf-man came to her, begging her to accompany him and help his wife who was in labour. The woman having consented to accompany him, he took her on his back and descended with her into the earth through a fountain. Here the woman learned that the Elf-wife could not be delivered without the aid of a Christian woman, she being herself a Christian, but had been carried off by the Elf-man.

When the child was born, the Elf-man took it in his arms and went away with it, which, as the mother told the woman, he did for the reason, that if he could find two newly married persons, in the bridal bed, before they had repeated their Paternoster, he could, by laying the child between them, procure for it all the good fortune that was designed for the newly married pair. The wife then instructed her helper as to what she had to do when the Elf-man returned: "First," said she, "you must eat nothing, if he asks you; for I ate, and therefore never returned. Next, if he will make you a present, and gives you the choice between something that looks like silver and something that looks like potsherds, do you

choose the latter. And when he again bears you hence, seize, if you can, on a gooseberry bush, and say: Now, in the name of God, now I am on my own!"

In an hour the man returned with the child, quite angry that he had not found what he had been seeking after. He then offered the stranger woman some refection, and on her refusal to take any, said: "They did not strike thee on the mouth who taught thee that." He then offered her a present, but she accepted only some black potsherds; and when she again found herself on the face of the earth, she did as she had been directed. With the potsherds in her apron, she now proceeded to her dwelling, but before she entered she cast them into the ash-hole, and refused to tell her husband where she had been. But when the maid-servant came running into the room, saying that something shone like silver in the ash-hole, and when she herself saw that it was pure silver, she told her husband where she had been, and they came into good circumstances through that Christmas eve.

One night a Troll came to a midwife in Bingsbierg and requested her to accompany him down through a mound to help his wife. She followed him into the earth, without suffering any injury; but having afterwards divulged what she had seen in the mound, she lost her sight.

An Elf-wife who was in labour sent a message to a midwife, requesting her aid. Having received the child, the Elf-folk gave her an ointment to rub over its eyes; but in doing which some adhered to her fingers, so that she inadvertently anointed her own eyes with it. On her way home she remarked that something had happened to her sight; for as she passed by a rye-field she saw that it

swarmed with small Elf-folk, who went about clipping off the ears. "What are ye doing there?" cried the woman, on seeing them steal the corn from the field; and got for answer: "If thou canst see us, thus thou shalt be served." They then thronged about her and put out her eyes.

TROLLS AT UGLERUP.

In Uglerup there once dwelt a man well to do in the world, named Niels Hansen. The wealth he possessed, it was said, he acquired through the Trolls. One day, to wit, as his wife was raking hay together in the field, she caught a large fat toad between the teeth of her rake, which she gently released, saying: "Poor thing! I see that thou needest help: I will help thee." Some time after, a Troll came to her by night, desiring her to accompany him into the mount where he dwelt. When, in compliance with the Troll's request, she had entered into the mount, she there found a Troll-wife lying in bed, and at the same time remarked a hideous serpent hanging down just above her head. Thereupon said the Troll-wife to her: "As you are now frightened at the serpent that hangs over your head, so frightened was I when I stuck in your rake. But as you were kind to me, I will give you good advice. When you go from this place, my husband will offer you a quantity of gold; but, unless you cast this knife behind you when you go out, it will be nothing but coal when you reach home. And when he causes you to mount and rides away with you, be mindful to glide down from the horse, when you come over a slough; else you will never see your home again."

While Niels Hansen's wife was thus in the mount, she went into the Troll's kitchen, where she saw her own serving-man and maid standing and grinding malt. As they did not know her, she went up to them and cut a

piece out of the linen of each, which she kept. At length, the Troll made her a costly present of gold, and she did as the Troll-wife directed; and when she was riding home with him, she slipt from him, according to the instructions she had received, and before morning reached her house with all her treasure.

The next day, when the man and maid appeared before her, they both complained of pain in the arms, as if from excessive fatigue. She then told them that they should recite a prayer and make the sign of the cross before going to bed, seeing that, unknown to themselves, they had been in the mount during the night, and had there ground malt for the Trolls. At this they laughed and thought she was joking; but when she showed them the pieces of linen, they could no longer withhold their belief, seeing that the pieces corresponded with the holes. She then related to them the adventure of the night.

THE MIDWIFE OF FUUR.

Many years ago there was a midwife on the isle of Fuur, who was one night waked by a violent knocking at her door. On opening it she saw a diminutive creature who begged of her to follow him to attend an Elf-wife. She yielded to his entreaties, and was missing for a long time after. At length her husband happening one night to pass by the Elf-mount, saw that it was illuminated, that there was great parade and merry-making within, and, on taking a more accurate survey, that among the gayest of the company was his own wife. He beckoned to her, and they conversed together for a while; and when, in spite of her caution, he called her by name, she was compelled to accompany him; but from that time he never had the least good of her: she sat constantly by the kitchen table and was dumb ever after.

SKOTTE.

At Gudmandstrup there is a mount called Hiulehöi. The Troll-folk that inhabit this mount are well known in the neighbouring villages, and if any person forgets to make a cross on his beer cask, the Trolls will sneak out of Hiulehöi and steal his beer. One evening late a peasant passing by the mount, saw that it was standing on red pillars, and that beneath were music, dancing and a grand festivity. While he stood viewing the joyous spectacle, the music and dancing ceased on a sudden, and amid much lamentation he heard a Troll cry out: "Skotte has fallen into the fire! Come and help him out!" The mount then sank and all the merry-making was at an end.

In the mean time the peasant's wife was at home alone, and while she was sitting spinning her flax, she was not aware that a Troll had crept in at the window of the adjoining room and was standing by the cask drawing beer into his copper kettle. At this moment the peasant entered the apartment quite bewildered at what he had seen and heard. "Now, mother," said he, "now I will tell you what has just happened to me"—The Troll was all attention—"As I passed by Hiulehöi, there was a great merry-making; but when it was at the highest, there was an outcry in the mount that Skotte had fallen into the fire." On hearing this, the Troll, who was still standing by the beer cask, was so startled that he let the beer run, the kettle fall, and hurried away as quickly as possible through the window. By the noise the people were soon led to discover what had been going on at the beer cask; but as they found the copper kettle, they took it as an equivalent for the spilt beer.

KING PIPPE IS DEAD!

Between Nordborg and Sönderborg, on the isle of Als, there is a mount called Stakkelhöi, which in former days

was inhabited by a multitude of the subterranean folk, who were noted for their diligent researches in the neighbouring pantries. One evening late, as a man was passing over Stakkelhöi to Hagenbierg, he heard some one in the mount exclaim: "Now King Pippe is dead!" These words he retained in his memory. At the same time, one of the mount-people of Stakkelhöi was paying a visit at a peasant's in Hagenbierg, for the purpose of letting some of his beer flow into a silver jug that he had brought with him. The Troll was just sitting cheek by jowl with the cask, when the aforesaid man entered the house and told the peasant how, as he was passing over Stakkelhöi, he heard a voice in the mount saying: "Now King Pippe is dead!" At this the Troll in a fright exclaimed: "Is King Pippe dead?" and rushed out of the house with such haste that he forgot to take his silver jug with him.

THE TROLL AT MÆHRED.

At Mæhred near Præstö, as a smith was one day hammering at his forge, he heard a great moaning and sobbing outside. Looking out at his door he saw a Troll driving a pregnant woman before him and crying without intermission: "A little further yet! a little further yet!" At this spectacle the smith sprang forwards with a red hot iron, which he held behind the woman, so that the Troll was forced to abandon his prey and take to flight. He then took the woman under his protection, who was shortly after delivered of two sons. Thereupon he went to her husband, in the supposition of finding him inconsolable for her loss; but on stepping into the apartment, he perceived a woman, exactly resembling the man's wife, lying in bed. He at once saw how the matter stood, seized an axe, and with it struck the witch on the head as she lay. While the man was bewailing the death of his

supposed wife, the smith brought him the genuine one together with the two new-born babes.

THE MAN IN THE ÖXNEBIERG.

At Rolfsted there is a mount called the Öxnebierg, by which there runs a rivulet, but between the mount and the rivulet there is to be seen a pathway trodden down in the corn, and which, according to the testimony of three men, who lay one night on the mount, is known to be so trodden by 'the Man in the Öxnebierg,' who rides out every night on his dapple-gray horse, which he waters in the rivulet.

There was a similar path from the mount down to a spring in a garden at Bækstrup. It passed through a break in the hedge, which, how often soever it might be filled up, was always found open again on the following day. In the dwelling to which the spring belonged the mistress was hardly ever in good health; but her husband, in consequence of advice given him, having filled up the well and dug another in another place, the woman from that time recovered her health, and the hole in the hedge was no more opened.

THE UNBIDDEN GUESTS.

In a house in the neighbourhood of Östrel, between Aalborg and Thisted, the master and mistress remarked that the meat at dinner always disappeared very speedily, however large the quantity might be. They consulted with their serving-man, who was a knowing fellow, as to the cause, who being aware that a neighbouring mount was inhabited by a swarm of little Trolls, hit upon the idea that some of these probably partook of the fare, and therefore resolved to keep watch. On the following day, when the dinner was nearly ready, he went to the mount, where, applying his ear, he heard a great bustle and con-

fusion beneath, and one saying to another: "Give me my hat, dinner is ready." Hearing this, the man also cried out: "Give me my hat," and was answered: "Here's none but old dad's." "That will do," said the man, and instantly a hat was flung to him out of the mount. Having put it on his head, he saw the Trolls coming out of the mount in swarms, and running towards his master's house. He speedily followed them, and on entering the apartment saw them already seated at the table, and busily regaling themselves with a pancake, which the mistress had just served up. The man also sat down and ate with them; but in a few seconds the pancake vanished. Angry that there was no more, one of the little Trolls leaped on the table and untrussed his points over the empty dish. On seeing this, the man took up his knife and gave the shameless little wretch a slash, who uttered a loud scream and all ran away. The man now took off his hat, called his mistress and the people of the household, and asked them whether they had seen anything. They answered, that they had heard the door bang, also a scream, but seen nothing.

In the evening, when the man was going to bed, he heard the bucket in the well drawn up and down. Whereupon he put on the hat, went into the yard and saw the Trolls watering their little horses. He asked them whether they wished for a repetition of what they had experienced at dinner? but they besought him earnestly to allow them to water their horses at the well, as there was no water in the mount. This the man allowed them to do, on condition that they should never more steal the dinner.

On the following morning the man found two gold pieces hanging to the well; and from that day the good housewife has kept her dinner secure from uninvited guests.

ELLEVILDE, OR ELF-CRAZED.

Not far from Ebeltoft, as a boy was watching cattle, there came to him a beautiful damsel, who asked him whether he was hungry or thirsty. But he, observing that she was particularly careful not to let him see her back, felt convinced that she was an Elf, the Elves being hollow behind. He would therefore hold no converse with her, but endeavoured to avoid her. When she remarked this, she presented her breast that he might suck her, in which there was so much fascination, that he had no more power to resist. After he had done as she bade him he was no longer master of himself, so that she found it no difficult matter to induce him to go with her. For three days he was absent. In the mean time his parents were at home bewailing his loss; for they felt certain that he had been decoyed away. But on the fourth day the father saw him coming at a distance, and desired his wife to set a pan on the fire with bacon as speedily as possible. Immediately after the son entered and sat down without uttering a syllable. Nor did the old man speak a word, but acted as if everything was as it should be. The mother then set the meat before her son, and the father desired him to eat; but he let the food stand untouched, saying that he knew where he could get better fare. The man now grew angry, and taking up a heavy stick, again ordered him to take his food. The lad was then compelled to eat, and when he had once tasted the bacon, he devoured it greedily, and then fell into a profound sleep. He slept as many days as the fascination lasted, but never from that time recovered the use of his understanding.

THE BRUDEHÖI, OR BRIDE MOUNT.

Near Borbierg church, in the diocese of Ribe, there is a mount called Brudehöi, or The Bride's Mount, which

name it is said to have derived from the following event.

When King Cnut the Great was engaged in building Borbierg church, there dwelt in the above-mentioned mount a vicious Troll, who every night demolished what had been erected during the day, so that the work could not proceed. Thereupon the king made an agreement with the Troll, promising him the first girl that should come to the church as a bride. The building now went on prosperously and was soon completed. There then sat the Troll, waiting in his mount till a bridal company should pass. On the first opportunity he seized the bride and dragged her into the mount. From that time the place has been held in such dread, that all bridal couples, on their way to Borbierg church, rather go a mile or more about than pass by the mount.

In Reiersen's Description of St. Bent's church at Ringsted, it is said of that structure: "There are two entrances to the church, viz. a large gate in the north chapel, through which the people usually pass into the church; and a smaller one on the same side towards the end of the edifice, through which all children that have been christened and all corpses are brought; also all bridal pairs pass that have been united in the church; nor would it be possible to get any of these to be conveyed or pass through the large door, though from what cause no one can tell." In Scania there is also a Bride-mount, where a Troll named Gyllebert carried off a bride, on which account no bride ever passes by it.

HANS PUNTLÆDER.

In the field of Bubbelgaard in Fyen there are three mounts, which from the following event are known by the name of the 'Dandse-höie.' At Bubbelgaard there was a serving-lad named Hans, who one evening passing through the field above-mentioned, saw that one of the mounts was raised up on red pillars[1], and that there were dancing

[1] In a Sleswig tradition the pillars are said to be golden. Müllenhoff, No. CDII. 2.

and merriment beneath. Struck with the beauty of the spectacle which he witnessed, he felt singularly attracted nearer and nearer, until the fairest of all the fair lasses approached him and gave him a kiss. From that moment he was no more master of himself, and became so unmanageable that he tore all his clothes to tatters, until at length it was found necessary to make him a garment of sole leather (puntlæder), which he was unable to tear asunder; for which reason he ever after went by the name of Hans Puntlæder.

THE AGED BRIDE.

At a marriage at Nörre-Broby near Odense, the bride during a dance left the apartment and walked without reflection towards a mount in the adjacent field, where at the same time there were dancing and merriment among the Elf-folk. On reaching the mount, she saw that it was standing on red pillars, and at the same moment an Elf came and presented to her a cup of wine. She took the cup, and having emptied it, suffered herself to join in a dance. When the dance was ended she bethought herself of her husband and hastened home. Here it appeared to her that everything in and about the place was changed, and on entering the village, she recognised neither house nor farm, and heard nothing of the noisy mirth of the wedding. At length she found herself standing before her husband's dwelling, but on entering saw no one whom she knew, and no one who knew her. One old woman only, on hearing the bride's lamentation, exclaimed: "Is it then you, who a hundred years ago disappeared at my grandfather's brother's wedding?" At these words the aged bride fell down and instantly expired.

BONDEVETTE.

In Bornholm there was once a peasant named Bonde-

vette, who, it was said, was born of a Mer-wife. His father, as it is related, going once down to the sea-shore, saw a Mer-wife there, with whom he had intercourse. At their parting she said to him: "In a year thou shalt return, when thou shalt find a son here, who shall drive away the Mountain-imps and Trolls." It befell as she had said; for the man, on returning exactly a year after, found a little male child lying on the shore, which he took with him, fostered it, and called it Bondevette, because its father was a *bonde*[1] and its mother a *vette*[2]. As the child grew up he became large and strong, and also *synsk*, so that he could see what was invisible to others. When his father died, Bondevette succeeded to the farm and took to himself a wife.

Not far from his dwelling there was a mount called Korshöi. As he was one day passing by, he heard the Trolls within, who were busied in carving a piece of wood, utter the words, "Cut it, Snef! that's almost like Bondevette's wife." His wife was just at that time lying in, and the Trolls had made a wooden image of her, which they intended to lay in her place, when they had carried her off. And this they accomplished; for while she was lying in bed, and the women were sitting around her, the Trolls brought their wooden figure into the room, took the woman out of bed, and laid the image in her place, as if it were the woman herself. Their next object was to convey her through the window to some other Trolls, who stood without to receive her; but Bondevette, who had had an eye upon their proceedings, placed himself by the window, took his wife and concealed her in the house, unknown to the other women. He then caused the oven to be heated very hot, took the image that lay in the bed, and thrust it into the oven, where it blazed and crackled prodigiously, while the women who were sitting in the

[1] A countryman, peasant of free condition. [2] See vol. i. p. 116.

room and saw what he had done, made a woful outcry, thinking that he had burnt his wife. But he afterwards set their minds at ease, by showing them where he had laid his own wife.

Another time, as he was passing by Korshöi, he heard the Trolls within say: "To-morrow Bondevette's wife brews, so we will away and steal her beer." Whereupon he went home and ordered the brewing kettle to be filled with water, and the water to be heated to boiling. He then said to his men; "Wherever I cast water do you strike with stout cudgels." So when the Trolls came with their bucket and a strong iron rod to fetch the beer, Bondevette cast the boiling water over them and scalded them, while the men beat about with their cudgels, but without seeing that they were belabouring the Trolls. In this manner he drove them off with such speed that they had no time to take with them either bucket or iron rod. The latter Bondevette afterwards gave to the church; and it is the same on which the church door yet hangs.

Once, as he was passing the same mount by night, he saw how the Trolls were dancing around it. When they saw him they would drink to him, and handed him a cup; but he cast the liquor over his shoulder, some of which falling on his horse, burnt both its hide and hair. Bondevette hastened away with the cup, which he afterwards gave to the church, and which was subsequently made into a chalice and paten. It is furthermore said of him, that he continued in the same course towards the Trolls, until they at last grew tired of inhabiting Korshöi.

THE GIANT'S DAUGHTER AND THE PLOUGHMAN.

In Tröstrup Mark there is a barrow, in which a giant lies buried, of whom it is related that he had a daughter of gigantic form and power. As she was one day crossing a field, she found a man ploughing, and thinking it was

some sort of plaything, she took him with his team and plough up in her pinafore, and carried them to her father, saying: "See what I have found in the fields, while I was raking in the ground." But her father answered: "Let them go: they will drive us away[1]."

SVEND FÆLLING.

Svend Fælling was a doughty champion, born at Fælling in Jutland. For a considerable length of time he served on the farm of Aakiær near Aarhuus, and as the roads were not secure, on account of Trolls and other subterranean beings, who bear enmity towards all Christian folk, he undertook the office of letter-carrier. As he was once passing along, there came to him the Troll from Jelshöi, requesting his aid in a battle with the Troll of Borum-Eshöi. Svend Fælling expressed his willingness, thinking himself sufficiently strong and daring. To try his strength, however, the Troll held out to him a thick iron bar, but which, strong as he was, he was unable to lift. The Troll then handed him a horn, desiring him to drink from it, and when he had drunk a little, he could lift the bar; and when he had again drunk, it was still lighter to him; but when he had emptied the horn, he was able to brandish the bar, and learned from the Troll that he had the strength of twelve men. He then made ready to proceed against the Troll of Borum-Eshöi, and was told that he would meet a black and a red bull on the way, and that he should attack the black one, and drive him with all his might from the red bull. This he did, and afterwards learned that the black bull was the Troll from Borum-Eshöi, and the red one the Troll from Jelshöi, from whom, in recompense, he received, as a permanent gift, the strength of twelve men, though with the condition that if he ever divulged to any one how he

[1] See more on this subject in Grimm, D. M. pp. 505, *sq.*

had acquired such power, he should, as a punishment, receive also the appetite of twelve.

From that time the report of Svend Fælling's strength became wide-spread throughout the country, seeing that he was constantly displaying it in divers manners. It is related of him that being once offended at a milk-maid, he so threw her that she found herself sitting across the gable of a house. When this feat was reported to the proprietor of Aakiær, he ordered Svend Fælling to be called before him, and commanded him to relate how he had acquired such vast bodily strength. But as Svend well remembered the Troll's warning, he refused until he got his master's promise that he should have as much to eat as he desired. From that day he ate and drank the portion of twelve men. At Aakiær there is still shown a flesh-pot which he emptied daily, and which is called Svend Fælling's flesh-pot. At the same place there is also said to be a huge two-handed sword three ells long, which once belonged to him; also an ancient beech with a large ring in it, to which he was accustomed to tie his horse.

According to other accounts, Svend Fælling served as a boy at the farm of Siellevskov, and it once happened, when he had ridden on a message to Ristrup, that it was evening before he reached home. As he passed by the mount called Borum-Eshöi, he observed the Elf-girls, who kept incessantly dancing round his horse. One of these approaching him, presented to him a costly drinking horn and invited him to drink. Svend took the horn, but having no great faith in what it contained, he threw it out behind him, so that it fell on his horse's back and singed the hair off. The horn he held fast, and clapping spurs to his horse, rode away with all possible speed, followed by the Elf-damsel, until he reached Trigebrand's

mill, where he rode over the running water, across which the Elves cannot follow. Thereupon the Elf-damsel earnestly implored him to give her the horn back, promising him in recompense the strength of twelve men; on which assurance he returned the horn to her, and got what she promised him. But he thereby frequently found himself in difficulty, seeing that he had at the same time acquired the appetite of twelve. When he returned home in the evening of that day, the people were just having their Christmas beer; and feeling disposed to be merry at his expense, they sent him to fetch beer, saying: "Svend! do thou go and fetch us our beer, then we will drink no more this Christmas." Svend said nothing and went, but came back with a cask in each hand and one under each arm.

Near the village of Steenstrup there is a mount called Havbierg, on which the doughty Svend Fælling was wont to sit while washing his hands and feet in Sönderstrand, which is distant about an eighth of a mile. In Holmstrup the peasants cooked meat for him, which they brought him in huge brewing vessels. When he was dead, he was buried at Dalhöi, between Loms and Holmstrup.

In the old Danish ballad of 'Svend Felding's Kamp med Risen,' Svend is described as going on a pilgrimage to Rome, and on his way arriving at a city called Hövdingsö, the princess of which informs him that the land is being made desolate by a giant who feeds only on women and maidens. Svend undertakes to encounter this monster, and a number of horses are led forth, that he may select one qualified to bear him in the ensuing combat. These proving either too shy or too weak, he wishes for a Jutland horse, when a miller passes by, who informs him that he has a Jutland horse that can carry fifteen skippund. This horse is so powerful and violent that he bursts every saddle-girth that is applied to him, until fifteen maidens knit a girth of silk and gold, seven ells long, a quarter of an ell thick and five spans broad, which fully answers its purpose. Svend finally kills the giant [1].

[1] Danske Viser fra Middelalderen, i. 150.

In Borberg church, in the diocese of Ribe, there is a remarkable gilt altar-piece with figures of alabaster, representing the history of Svend Felding, so celebrated in the Danish chronicles, as well as that of the giant, who would have only women and maidens; also the Danish horse that could carry fifteen skippund of corn, which the miller gave to Svend Felding to bear him in the combat; the giant's head, which Svend Felding cut off; the damsels who wove the thick saddle-girth; the priest who absolved Svend Felding of his sins before he went to the encounter [1].

ALTAR-CUPS.

In Holbek amt, in Seeland, between Marup and Aagerup, there was once a large castle, the ruins of which may still be seen on the shore. At this place, tradition tells us, there are vast riches, and that a dragon under the earth broods over three kings' ransoms. The underground folk are often to be seen here, particularly on solemn occasions, when they have dancing and merry-making on the shore.

One Christmas eve a man in Aagerup asked his master to let him ride down to see the Trolls' merry-making. The master allowed him to take the best horse in the stable. On reaching the spot, he sat a while on his horse witnessing the festivity, and while wondering to see the mount-folk dance, a little Troll came to him, who invited him to dismount and partake of their mirth. Another then came springing, who took his horse's rein and held it while the man dismounted and danced with them the whole night. When the morning drew nigh, he thanked them for their hospitality and mounted his horse, when they invited him to come again on the following new year's night, when there would be another merry-making. A damsel then brought him a gold cup, bidding him take a parting draught; but feeling some mistrust, he, while feigning to put the cup to his lips, cast the liquor over his shoulder, so that it fell on the horse's back, the hairs of which it

[1] J. Hofman, Fundgr. iv. 613.

singed. Applying then the spurs to his horse's sides, he rode away cup in hand over a ploughed field, followed by all the Trolls, who finding it very difficult to traverse the deep furrows, cried incessantly: "Ride on the smooth and not on the rough!" But it was not until he approached the village that he found it necessary to ride on the level road, whereby he was exposed to great peril, as the Trolls came nearer and nearer at every moment. In his extremity he put up a prayer, and for his safety promised to give the cup to the church. Having now reached the churchyard, he threw the cup over the wall, that that might at all events be secure. He then quickened his pace and entered the village, and just as the Trolls were about to seize the horse, it darted through the gateway of the house, and the man slammed the gate after him. He was now safe, but the Trolls were so exasperated that they fetched an enormously large stone, which they hurled with such force against the gate that four of the planks flew out. Of the house not a vestige remains, but the stone yet lies in Aagerup village. The cup was given to the church, and the man got as a reward the best farm on the estate of Ericsholm.

It is well worthy of remark, that William of Newbridge, who lived as early as the twelfth century, relates a story of a man in Yorkshire, who returning home one night, saw a mound open, in which a number of persons were feasting, one of whom offered him a cup, the contents of which he poured out, and rode off with the cup. The cup was presented to Henry I., from whose hands it passed into those of David, king of Scotland, and was finally given by William the Lion to King Henry II. The province of Deiri, the scene of this tradition, it must be recollected was chiefly inhabited by the descendants of the Northmen[1].

In Scotland "it is still currently believed, that he who has courage to rush upon a fairy festival, and snatch from them their drinking cup or horn, shall find it prove to him a cornucopiæ of good fortune, if he can bear it in safety across a running stream. A goblet is still carefully preserved in Edenhall, Cumberland, which is supposed to have been seized

[1] Keightley, F. M. p. 283.

at a banquet of the elves, by one of the ancient family of Musgrave; or, as others say, by one of their domestics, in the manner above described. The fairy train vanished, crying aloud,

If this glass do break or fall,
Farewell the luck of Edenhall[1]!"

Between North and South Kongerslev are two mounts, one of which is called Örnehöi, the other Kiærlinghöi; both are inhabited by Troll-folk, who are at enmity with each other.

One Christmas eve, a farmer in South Kongerslev was sitting at table talking with his man: "Christian," said he, "what may the Mount-folk in Kiærlingbierg be about?" "What are they about?" answered the man, "what can that concern us?" The farmer then said that it would be amusing to see the mount standing on four pillars and all the merriment beneath. To which the man replied, that if he might take the one-coloured horse that stood in the stable, he would go and bring him back the information he wished, and also a token that he had been there. The farmer allowed him to take the horse, and when he reached the spot he found the mount standing on four pillars, and great feasting and mirth beneath. For a while he sat quiet on the horse and looked on, but when just about to return, he began crying out: "hou! vildt! hou! vildt!" which people are wont to cry when they have lost their way. As soon as the Mount-folk saw him, a little boy, with a red cap on his head, came out and offered him drink from a gold cup. He took the cup, but cast out the liquor and hastened away at full speed. Being followed by all the Trolls, he was nearly overtaken by them just as he passed by Örnebierg; but the Trolls there, seeing him pursued by those of Kiærlingbierg, cried out:

[1] Scott's Minstrelsy, ii. p. 130.

"Ride off the hard, up on the fallow, and you will escape them!" This the man understood quite well, quitted the road, rode up into the ploughed field, and so escaped, the little Trolls of the mount being unable to follow him over the furrows. On reaching the farm, he made a cross at the gate, a cross on the horse, a cross on the door, and a cross on the cup, which he still held in his hand.

Now he must tell his master all he had seen and heard: first, that all the Trolls in Kiærlinghöi are called either Vidrik or Didrik, so that during their feast it was to be heard on every side: "Your health, Vidrik!" "Thank you, Didrik!" "Your health, Vidrik's wife!" "Thank you, Didrik's sweetheart!" and the like. He further told him that they could not say *a merry feast*. At length, in proof of the truth of his story, he drew forth the costly cup that he had taken from the Trolls, which precious acquisition was highly valued in the house, and brought forth only on extraordinary occasions.

On the following Christmas eve a little man in tatters came to the house and begged a night's lodging of the mistress. "Yes, certainly," said the woman, "come into the room and get something to live on." She then cut him an excellent luncheon of fine bread with butter and other good things upon it, but the miserable fellow would not touch it. In the evening, when supper was brought in, the mistress invited him to sit down and partake of their meal, but still he would touch nothing. "What if I were to offer him a drink of good beer in our beautiful cup," thought the woman within herself; and did so accordingly; but no sooner had the beggar received it, than both he and the cup vanished from her sight, although the door continued closed.

TROLLS IN THE RED STONE.

As a man on horseback, accompanied by his dog, was passing one evening late by the Red-stone, a projecting crag on the isle of Fuur in the Liimfiord, he saw by the moonlight the Trolls carrying their gold and silver treasures out to the little knolls thereabout, for the purpose of exposing them to the air. The man happened to have his gun with him, and having heard that, if any one can shoot three times over them, the Trolls must go into the mound and leave their treasure behind them, he shot accordingly; but being unable to restrain his cupidity until daybreak, when he could convey the treasure home at his ease without hindrance, he put the whole into a bag and hurried away. As he was riding along between two banks, he heard something puffing and panting behind him, and on looking round, saw a little man with a long beard, on a horse not larger than a cat, but without a head, and with a diminutive black dog by his side. He easily guessed that it was the Troll of the Red-stone. "Wilt thou let thy horse fight with mine?" said the little man. "No, God forbid!" answered the man. "Or thy dog with mine?" "No, God forbid!" "Or wilt thou thyself engage with me, little as I am?" "No, God forbid!" At the same time the man whipped his horse and rode away as fast as he could. When he got home and was within his own doors, there seemed to be a storming and hissing without, and the whole house appeared to be in a blaze. Being well aware what sorcery was going forward, he took up the bag with the treasure and flung it out. The sorcery thereupon ceased, and a voice without cried: "Thou hast still enough!" Next morning he found a heavy silver cup that had fallen behind a chest of drawers.

THE TROLL'S GLOVE.

Near Hvidovre in Seeland there is a large mount in which a Troll dwelt, who went every night from the mount, through a neighbouring farm-yard, down to the rivulet, to fetch water: his foot-marks might easily be traced in the grass. One morning, as the farmer was going to his turf-field, he found on this path a glove so large that the thumb could hold a barrel of rye. When he brought it home, all were amused with it, and were unanimous that it must belong to the Troll. The following midnight, as the man lay asleep, he was awaked by a loud knocking at the window, followed by the words :—

"Vante, Ven!	The glove, friend!
Giv mig min Vante igien;	Give me my glove again;
Ellers ligge to af dine Heste,	Else shall lie two of thy horses.
De störste og de bedste,	The largest and the best,
Döde imorgen paa Mosen!"	Dead to-morrow on the moor.

Thereupon the farmer took the glove, went out of the house, and hung it on a beam-end over the window, and having made a cross on the door, again went in. In the morning the glove was away and the beam-end was found snapped off level with the wall. From that time nothing more was ever heard of the Troll; his path became grown over and was no longer to be traced.

The idea of the gigantic glove is evidently derived from that of Skrymir, in the story of Thor and Udgarda-Loki.[1]

THE TROLL OUTWITTED.

A husbandman, who had a little mount on his field, resolved not to let it lie waste, and began to plough it up. At this the Troll, who dwelt in the mount, came out and demanded who it was that dared to plough on his roof. The husbandman said that he did not know it was his roof, and at the same time represented to him that it

[1] Vol. i. p. 56.

was disadvantageous for both to let such a piece of land lie uncultivated; that he was willing to plough, sow and reap every year, and that the Troll should alternately have that which in one year grew on the earth, and the man that which grew beneath, and the next year the reverse. To this the Troll agreed, and the man in the first year sowed carrots, and in the year following, corn, and gave the Troll the tops of the carrots and the roots of the corn. From that time there was a good understanding between them.

RAGINAL.

A farmer fell into poverty because he could not keep any cows in his stalls, the necks of all having been broken one after another. He therefore left the dwelling, which was sold to another. When the new proprietor came into the cowhouse one evening and saw that everything was in tolerable condition, he exclaimed: "Good evening, Raginal!" whereupon a voice answered: "What! dost thou know me?" "Yes, I have known thee for many a year!" "If," said the Troll, who dwelt beneath, "thou wilt move thy cowhouse to some other place, thou shalt then become an opulent man. I have my habitation under the cows, and their dirt falls down on my table every day, so that I have been obliged to break their necks." The man removed the cowhouse, and thrived from that time.

That a similar superstition was known in Scotland, will appear from the following: "The Scottish fairies, in like manner, sometimes reside in subterranean abodes, in the vicinity of human habitations, or, according to the popular phrase, under the 'door-stane,' or threshold; in which situation they sometimes establish an intercourse with men, by borrowing and lending, and other kindly offices. In this capacity they are termed 'the good neighbours,' from supplying privately the wants of their friends, and assisting them in all their transactions, while their favours are concealed. Of this the traditionary story of Sir Godfrey Macculloch forms a curious example.

"As this Gallovidian gentleman was taking the air on horseback, near his own house, he was suddenly accosted by a little old man, arrayed in

green, and mounted upon a white palfrey. After mutual salutation, the old man gave Sir Godfrey to understand, that he resided under his habitation, and that he had great reason to complain of the direction of a drain, or common sewer, which emptied itself directly into his chamber of dais. Sir Godfrey was a good deal startled by this extraordinary complaint; but, guessing the nature of the being he had to deal with, he assured the old man, with great courtesy, that the direction of the drain should be altered; and caused it to be done accordingly. Many years afterwards, Sir Godfrey had the misfortune to kill, in a fray, a gentleman of the neighbourhood. He was apprehended, tried, and condemned. The scaffold, upon which his head was to be struck off, was erected on the Castle-hill of Edinburgh; but hardly had he reached the fatal spot, when the old man upon his white palfrey, pressed through the crowd, with the rapidity of lightning. Sir Godfrey, at his command, sprung on behind him; the 'good neighbour' spurred his horse down the steep bank, and neither he nor the criminal were ever again seen [1]."

A woman was returning late one night from a gossiping. A pretty little boy came up to her and said: "Coupe yere dish-water farther frae yere door-step; it pits out our fire [2]."

GILLIKOP.

Some Jutlanders having got a little Troll into their power, thought they could not do better than make him a Christian, and therefore set him in a cart for the purpose of driving him to church and having him baptized. As he there sat peeping out, the men heard a voice in the road calling aloud: "Where now, Gillikop?" to which the little Troll in the cart responded: "A long way, Slangerop! I am going to a little water yonder, where I hope to become a better man."

THE TROLLS DESIRE TO BE SAVED.

One night as a priest was going from Hiorlunde to Rolskilde, he passed by a mount in which there were music, dancing and other merriment. At this moment some Dwarfs sprang forth from the mount, stopped the priest's

[1] Scott's Minstrelsy, ii. pp. 169, *sq.*

[2] Cromek, Nithsdale and Galloway Song, quoted by Keightley, F. M. p. 353.

vehicle, and said: "Whither art thou going?" "To Landemode," answered the priest. They then asked him whether he thought they could be saved; to which he replied that he could not then inform them. They then appointed him to meet them with an answer in a year. In the mean time it went ill with the coachman, who the next time he passed by the mount was overturned and killed on the spot. When the priest came again at the end of a year, they again asked him the same question, to which he answered: "No! you are all damned!" Scarcely had he uttered the words before the whole mount was in a blaze.

A similar story is told of the Nök, see p. 80. In the Irish story named 'The Priest's Supper,' a fisherman, at the request of the fairies, asks a priest who had stopt at his house, whether they would be saved or not at the last day. The priest desired him to tell them to come themselves and put the question to him, but this they declined doing, and the question remained unanswered [1].

THE TROLLS' FEAR OF THE CROSS.

Near Aarhuus there dwelt a smith, who one day, on his way to church, observed a Troll sitting by the road-side on a heap of coals and busied with two straws that were accidentally lying across each other on the heap; but in spite of all his labour, being unable to get them to lie otherwise, he besought the smith, who stood looking at him, to take the straws away. But the smith, who well knew the real state of the case, took the whole heap together with the cross, paying little attention to the outcry made by the Troll. It was found afterwards, when he reached home, that what appeared like coals was a great treasure over which the Troll had no longer power.

THE TROLLS' FEAR OF THUNDER.

The Mount-folk are exceedingly terrified at thunder,

[1] Keightley, F. M. p. 365.

and therefore hasten to get into their mounts when they see a storm drawing up to windward. In consequence of this terror they cannot endure the beating of drums, which is, in their opinion, a species of thunder [1]. A good method, therefore, to get rid of them is, to drum vigorously every day in the neighbourhood of their mounts; for then they will at length pack up, and wander to a more peaceful spot.

A countryman once lived in good fellowship with a Troll, who had his mount in the countryman's field. When his wife was once lying-in, he was a little embarrassed because he could not well avoid inviting the Troll to the birthday feast, which would give him a bad reputation both with the priest and with the other townsfolk. In this state of perplexity, from which he knew not how to extricate himself, he sought counsel of his swineherd, who was a shrewd fellow, and had often helped him on other occasions. The swineherd undertook to settle the matter with the Troll, so that, without being offended, he should not only stay away, but should give a handsome present. In pursuance of his plan, taking a bag with him, he went to the mount, knocked, and was admitted. He then in the name of his master invited the Troll to honour them with his presence at the lying-in festival. The Troll thanked him and said: "So, I shall then have to give you a gossip-gift;" at the same time opening his money chest and causing the man to hold the bag up, while he poured money into it. "Is there enough now?"—"Many give more, few give less," answered the swineherd. Thereupon the Troll began again to pour into the bag, and again asked, "Is there enough now?" The swineherd lifted the bag a little as a trial whether he could carry more, and answered, "Most people give as much." The

[1] Thor, the god of thunder, was the deadly foe of the Trolls. See vol. i. p. 36.

Troll thereupon emptied the whole chest into the bag, and asked: "Is there now enough?" The man finding that he had now as much as he could carry, answered: "None give more, most people give less." "Well," said the Troll, "let us now hear who is to be there besides." "Ah," said the man, "we shall have great personages: first three priests and a bishop." "Umph!" growled the Troll; "though such high dons generally look only after what's to eat and drink; they are not likely to notice me. Now, who else?" "Then there's the Virgin Mary." "Umph! umph! Still there will be a retired place for me behind the stove. Now, who next?" "Then our Lord is to be there." "Umph! umph! umph! Still such exalted guests come late and make a short stay; but what music are you to have?" "Drums," answered the swineherd. "Drums," repeated the Troll, startled, "no thank you; I remain at home. Greet thy master from me, and thank him for his invitation; but I shall not come; for once, when I went out for a little walk, the folks began to drum, and when I was hastening away and had just reached my own door, they threw a drumstick after me and broke one of my thighs. From that time I have been lame, and shall beware of such music!" With these words he helped to lift the bag on the man's shoulders, and again desired him to greet his master.

The dread entertained by the Trolls for thunder dates from the time of paganism, Thor, the god of thunder, being the deadly foe of their race [1].

THE TROLLS' HATRED OF BELLS.

In Egens Mark a multitude of the dwarf race once made their appearance. They were all clad in gray jerkins and wore red caps. With respect to their persons, they were hump-backed, and had long hooked noses. Whitherso-

[1] See vol. i. p. 36.

ever they came they made sad havoc among the pantries, and people found it no easy task to get rid of them, until a pious and experienced man advised that a bell should be hung in the tower of Ebeltoft church. When this was done, people saw no more of the Trolls.

The *Korrigan* of Brittany have a similar abhorrence of bells.

In Dishöi a Troll had lived undisturbed for many years, because at that time there was no church in the neighbourhood. But when at length a church was built hard by, and the bells for the first time rung in the tower, the Troll in great tribulation came riding on a gold-shod horse to a peasant his neighbour, and delivered to him the keys of his treasure, as he himself must take his departure. The next day the peasant went to the mount to get the treasure: he found the door, but in his joy exclaimed: "Now I have it!" At the same instant both door and key vanished.

A peasant once observed a Troll in deep affliction sitting on a stone between Mullerup and Dalby. At first he imagined him to be a proper Christian man, and asked him to what place he was going. "I am going out of the country," answered the Troll, "for no one can now stay in it for sheer ringing and tolling."

THE TROLLS FORSAKE VENDSYSSEL.

It happened one evening that a stranger came to Sundby ferry and agreed with all the ferrymen, that during the whole night they should ferry over from Vendsyssel, without knowing what lading they were to have. They were told that half a mile east of Sundby they were to take in their freight. At the time appointed the stranger was on the spot, when the ferrymen, although they saw nothing, yet remarked that their boat sank more and more, whence

they concluded that they had received an exceedingly heavy lading on board. In this manner the ferry boats, during the whole night, passed backwards and forwards across the water; and although they at each time took a new freight, the same stranger was always present, that all might be done according to his orders. At the approach of morning the ferrymen received the stipulated payment, and on inquiring what it was they had conveyed across, could get no information. Among the ferrymen there was, however, a shrewd fellow, who knew much more about such matters than the others. He sprang on shore, took the earth from under his right foot and put it into his cap, and having set it upon his head, he perceived that all the sand-hills east of Aalborg were entirely covered with small Trolls, having red, peaked caps on their heads. From that time no dwarfs of that description have been seen in Vendsyssel.

THE ELF-FOLK FORSAKE ÆRÖ.

After that the miller in Dunkiær had repeatedly disturbed the subterranean folk in Elleshöi, and at length even ploughed over their mount in every direction, which they could not possibly endure, they prepared to quit the country and migrate to Norway.

There came one day a little old man to a poor skipper, who had no employment, and asked him whether he would like to have charge of a vessel. The man answered that he would gladly; but when the little man led him down to the shore at Gravendal, and showed him an old wreck, the skipper objected, telling him that such a wreck could not possibly keep the sea. The little man answered, that he might make himself quite easy on that score, might hire a sailor, and meet him again in three days, when the vessel should be ready to sail. The skipper in the mean-

while found it difficult to hire a sailor, for all that he applied to turned their backs on him and laughed, as soon as they heard that he was going to sail in the old wreck at Gravendal. At length he met with a poor lad who, in the hope of getting something to eat, allowed himself to be hired.

On the third day the skipper and his helpmate were at Gravendal, where they found the bark lying at anchor and, instead of sails, hung with rags. The wind being fair they departed instantly. When on their way, the skipper being curious to see what sort of cargo he had on board, peeped down the hatchway, where he perceived the whole place swarming as with innumerable rats and mice. And now the little man taking off his hat, placed it on the head of the skipper, who thereby became so clear-sighted that he could see a multitude of small elves in travelling dresses, and withal a vast quantity of gold and silver, which they were taking with them.

On their arrival in Norway, the old man said: "Do thou go on shore: I will unload the vessel." The skipper did so, and when he came back the bark was empty, and on their return the little man desired him within three days to expect another freight. The skipper having fulfilled his engagement, the old man desired him to follow him and take with him two sacks. "Now thou shalt be paid for thy labour," said he, at the same time filling one of the sacks with shavings and the other with coals. "Give the lad his share," added he, and took his departure. With such payment the skipper was not over-satisfied. "Yes!" he muttered to himself, "we have, sure enough, got our pockets full." When they had been sailing about an hour, the skipper said, "Go, lad, and make us a drop of tea." "Yes, master," answered the lad, "but I have no fuel."—"Take a handful of shavings out of the sack."—"Master, they shine!" cried the lad. "What shines?"

asked the skipper; "take from the other sack."—"Master, they shine!" cried the lad a second time. The skipper himself now looked at the sacks, and found that one was full of gold coin and the other of silver. On their return they divided their treasure and became wealthy people.

The North German traditions of the departure of the "little people" resemble the foregoing in every essential particular, excepting that the water they have to cross is the Eider, the Weser, or the Aller, in place of those above-mentioned [1].

THE TROLLS CAST STONES AT CHURCHES.

Before the Trolls had forsaken the country, in consequence of the constant din of the church-bells, the erection of a new church was an intolerable vexation to them. Hence the numerous traditions, how during the night they destroyed the work, particularly when a church was to be raised near their habitations. Equally numerous, too, are the traditions all over the country, which tell how the Trolls hurled huge stones against the churches already built; a circumstance which affords a most satisfactory explanation of the manner in which the vast stones, which are scattered about, came into places where no human hand could have deposited them.

THE NISSE OR NISS.

In a house in Jutland a Nisse had long been accustomed, after the servant was gone to bed, to fetch his porridge from the kitchen, where it was set for him in a little wooden bowl. But one evening, on taking his porridge, he saw that the girl had forgotten to put butter in it, and in his anger at the omission went to the cowhouse and wrung the neck of the best cow. Afterwards feeling

[1] See Müllenhoff, No. CDXXIX. Kuhn and Schwartz, No. 270. Grimm, D. M. 428, *sq.* See also 'The Departure of the Fairies' in Keightley, F. M. p. 356, from Cromek's Nithsdale and Galloway Song.

hungry, he sneaked back, deeming it advisable to put up with the despised porridge, when after he had eaten a little, he discovered that there was butter in it, but that it had sunk to the bottom. For having thus wronged the servant he was sorely grieved, and to repair the injury he had done to the good folks, he went again to the cowhouse and placed a chest full of money by the side of the dead cow.

A similar tale is current in Holstein, with the difference only, that instead of a chest full of money, the Niss procures a cow similar in appearance to the one killed by him [1].

At a farm in Seeland, there was a Nisse who was active and cheerful at all kinds of work, provided only that he got butter in his porridge every night; for any reward beyond that he did not require. One morning, as the men were going to plough, he went to the farmer and requested him to let him drive the plough. The man thought that he was too little to drive four horses, but he answered: "I can very well sit up in the ear of one of the horses [2] and drive with four: I have done it before now." The man then let him have his way, and afterwards could not help confessing that he had never before had so excellent a driver. It was, moreover, highly amusing when any one passed and could not see the driver, who sat in the horse's ear, but only heard him crying out: "Hyp so! Hop so! Will ye go, ye old jades! Ye 'll get your hides curried! that ye may swear to!" When the farmer died the Nisse would no longer remain there, but transferred himself to the manor-house, where he continued for some time in concealment. Some days after, the proprietor got a new man, who was to thrash the winter corn. The first

[1] See Müllenhoff, No. CDXXXVIII.

[2] See the story of 'Daumesdick,' in K. and H. M. No. 37.

day, when the man came into the barn, he did nothing, but merely looked at the corn; the second day he did no more than the first, until Nis towards evening said to him: "Hear! I will come and help thee." To this the man had nothing to object, so it was settled that Nis should every night have for his supper porridge with butter in it. On the following morning, when the man came into the barn, Nis had already thrashed a heap of corn, containing about twenty-five loads. "Thou canst now cut up the straw by noon," said Nis, and as he helped him, so it was done. Then said the man: "But how shall we get the chaff separated from the barley?" "That I will soon show thee," said Nis. "Just go up outside on the top of the barn, and make a large hole in the roof, we shall then easily separate the chaff." When the man had so done, the Nisse opened every door in the barn, then went up to the hole, laid himself on his face, thrust his head through the hole, and sent forth a loud scream, so that all the chaff flew about over the whole yard. This brought the proprietor out, who on seeing what had been done was highly incensed: "I believe thou art mad, fellow!" said he. "Dost thou let the chaff, that we should have for the cattle in the winter, fly away in that manner?" "O! is that all, master?" said the man: "if you want the chaff in again, that you can soon have." The Nisse now helped the man to gather up the chaff and carry it in again, all which was accomplished in half an hour. "Go now in to your master," said the Nisse, "and tell him that the corn is thrashed, and the chaff gathered in a heap, if he will now come out and measure, that we may know how many bushels there are. But tell him, at the same time, that we must be paid for every bushel of chaff as well as for every bushel of corn; and that if he refuses, we will throw down the whole barn." When the man had delivered this message, the master answered laugh-

ing: "Yes, do so, if you can; but I am not so silly as to pay the same for chaff as for corn." When the Nisse received this answer, he merely said: "Well! if he will not, then come; we shall soon overthrow it." Both then went and placed their backs against one of the side walls, when it instantly began to totter. Seeing this, the proprietor ran out into the yard and yielded to the demand. So the man got well paid for his trouble, and did not forget to give his due recompense to the Nisse.

It is difficult to get rid of a Nisse. A man dwelt in a house where a Nisse carried his jokes so far, that he resolved to quit it, and leave the Nisse by himself. Just as he was about to send off the last load of his chattels, consisting chiefly of empty tubs and the like, and had taken a last farewell of the house and, as he thought, of the Nisse also, he went by chance to the back part of the cart, where to his unutterable dismay and astonishment, he espied the Nisse seated in a tub, and ready to accompany him. The man was of course excessively vexed at finding all his labour in vain, but the Nisse burst into a hearty laugh, and popping up his head from the tub, said, "So! we are moving to-day."

A being in many respects similar to the Niss is the Yorkshire *Boggart*, by whose pranks an honest farmer was nearly driven from his habitation. When his chattels were already in the cart, a voice from a deep upright churn cried out, "Aye, aye, Georgey, we 're flitting ye see."

Such, too, is the Irish *Cluricaun*. To get rid of one, the householder had resolved on removing, and the last cart, filled with empty barrels, etc., was just moving off, when from the bung-hole of one of them Wildbean cried out, "Here, master! here we go all together!" "What," said the master, "dost thou go also?" "Yes, to be sure, master; here we go all together[1]!"

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[1] Keightley, F. M. pp. 308, 369.

In the parish of Alstrup there once lived a man who had a beautiful white mare, which for many years had descended from father to son, and was the cause that a Nisse and, consequently, good luck were attached to the farm. This Nisse had such an affection for the mare that he could not endure to see her used for labour, and every night fed her in the best manner; and as he was accustomed to bring a superabundance of corn, both thrashed and unthrashed, from a neighbour's barn, all the other cattle had benefit thereof. But the farm at length got a new proprietor, who would not believe what was told him about the mare, and sold her to a poor neighbour. When five days had elapsed, the poor peasant, who had bought the mare, began to find his condition manifestly improving, while the other's circumstances became every day narrower, so that at length he could scarcely make shift to subsist. Had now the man that bought the mare only known how to profit by the good fortune that was come to him, his children's children would have been in affluence to this day; but seeing the great quantity of corn that was every night brought in, he felt a strong desire to see the Nisse also, and therefore concealed himself one night in the stable. At midnight he perceived the Nisse coming from his neighbour's barn, and bringing with him a sack full of grain; but the Nisse, having discovered that he was watched, was grievously vexed, and after having fed the mare tended her for the last time; then turning towards the place where the man lay watching, he bade him farewell. From that time the condition of both neighbours continued alike, seeing that each enjoyed the fruits of his own labour.

Of the predilection entertained by the Nisser for horses there are also many Swedish traditions.

Jutland once literally swarmed with Nisser. At Vosborg they found such good cheer that their abode there was characterized by their great diligence and care for the welfare of the proprietor. Every evening they got in their sweet porridge a large lump of butter, for all which they once gave a strong proof of zeal and gratitude. In a very severe winter, a remote cowhouse, in which were six calves, was so overwhelmed with snow, that for fourteen days no human being could get access to it. When the snow disappeared, it was naturally thought that the calves would be found starved to death,—but quite the contrary; they were all found strong and well, the stalls were swept, and the cribs full of excellent corn. It may easily be guessed who had taken care of them.

But the Nisse is, at the same time, sure to have revenge for any injury done him. One day, when a Nisse had run up into the loft over the cowhouse, a plank gave way, so that one of his legs went through. The farmer's boy, who happened just at the moment when this happened to be in the place beneath, on seeing the Nisse's leg hanging down, snatched up a dung-fork and gave it a violent blow. At dinner, when the people were all sitting at table in the servants' hall, the boy was constantly laughing to himself, and on being questioned by the overseer, he answered: "I 've had such a bout with Nis this morning, and given him an infernal bang with my fork, as he poked his leg down through the floor of the loft." "Nay," cried Nis from outside the window, "thou didst not give one, thou gavest me three; for the fork had three prongs; but it shall be paid thee back." On the following night, while the boy lay asleep, came Nis, seized him, and threw him over the house, but was so instantaneously on the other side that he caught him and again cast him back. This game was continued until the boy had been eight times over the house; the ninth time he let him fall into a

large pool of water, and then set up a horse-laugh, so that all who were in the dwelling were waked by it.

In a farm-house in Jutland there was a Nisse, who every evening got his porridge in proper time, and therefore helped both man and maid, and saw to the master's interest in every way possible. But there once entered into the farmer's service a mischievous lad, who took every opportunity of annoying the Nisse, and one night, when all were gone to rest, and the Nisse had taken his little wooden bowl, and was about to enjoy his evening meal, he discovered that the boy had concealed the butter at the bottom, in order to make him first eat the porridge and then find the butter when the porridge was consumed. Hereupon he resolved on giving the boy like for like. Going then up into the loft where the boy and the man-servant lay sleeping in the same bed, he took the coverlid off, when seeing the short lad by the side of the long carle, he said: "Short and long unequal," and so saying pulled the legs of the boy down, to make them even with those of the man. He then went to the head of the bed, and dragged the boy up again, uttering the same words. But as this process, in whichever way applied, did not succeed in making the boy as long as the man, he continued dragging the boy up and down until broad daylight; when feeling himself tired, he crept up and seated himself in the window-sill. At the sight of him, all the dogs in the yard—dogs bearing a great aversion to Nisser—began to bark, at which the Nisse, who was beyond their reach, was highly amused, and thrusting forth first one diminutive leg then the other, continued to teaze them, saying: "Look at this little trotter! Look at that little trotter!" In the meanwhile the boy waked, and sneaking behind the Nisse, who was going on with his "Look at this and

look at that little trotter," pushed him down among the dogs, crying out: "There! now look at him from top to toe!"

The North Germans have a story nearly identical with the foregoing [1].

The Scandinavian Niss is identical with the Scottish Brownie, who is described as "of a somewhat grotesque figure, dwarfish in stature, but endowed with great personal strength.....It was customary for the mistress of the house to leave out work for him.....To have offered him wages, or even to present him with an occasional boon, would have ensured his anger, and perhaps caused him to abandon the establishment altogether. The goodman of a farm-house in the parish of Glendevon leaving out some clothes one night for the brownie, he was heard during the night to depart, saying, in a highly offended tone,

'Gie brownie coat, gie brownie sark,
Ye'se get nae mair o' brownie's wark [2]!'"

Numerous other instances might be quoted.

Our own Robin Goodfellow was equally sensitive on this point. See a passage from 'The Mad Pranks and Merry Jests of Robin Goodfellow [3].'

Hilton Hall, in the vale of the Wear, was in former times the resort of a Brownie or House-spirit, called the Cauld Lad. For the purpose of getting rid of him, the servants left a green cloak and hood for him by the kitchen fire and remained on the watch. They saw him come in, gaze at the new clothes, try them on, and, apparently in great delight, go jumping and frisking about the kitchen; but at the first crow of the cock he vanished, crying—

Here 's a cloak and here 's a hood!
The Cauld Lad of Hilton will do no more good;

and he never again returned to the kitchen [4].

A similar story is told by Mrs. Bray (Letters to Southey) of the Devonshire Pixies, one of whom, on receiving new clothes, exclaims:

Pixy fine, Pixy gay,
Pixy now will run away.

A being closely resembling the Brownie is the Phynnodderie of the Isle of Man.

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[1] Müllenhoff, No. CDXLVI. See also p. 95.

[2] See p. 94, and Chambers, Pop. Rh. p. 33.

[3] Keightley, F. M. pp. 287, *sq.*

[4] Keightley, F. M. p. 296, from Richardson, Local Historian's Table-book.

THE KIRKEGRIM (CHURCH-GRIM).

In churches also there are Nisser, one in each, called a Kirkegrim, who dwells either in the tower or wherever he can find a place of concealment. He keeps order in the church, and punishes when any scandal is perpetrated.

In Sorö church there is a large, round hole in the roof, in which dwells that church's Nisse. Of this hole it is also said, that in former times the evil one was accustomed to fly out through it, when the priest in baptizing said: "Go out, thou unclean spirit!"

THE KIRKEGRIM AND THE STRAND-VARSEL.

At the time "when the sea-shores were not yet consecrated," it was dangerous to pass by night on the ways which lay along the coast, on account of the Strand-varsler by which they were infested. These were the spectres of those corpses that were driven on shore and still lay unburied. One night as a peasant was going along the strand towards Taarbek, a Strand-varsel sprang suddenly on his back and there clung fast, crying: "Carry me to the church!" The man having no alternative, carried him the shortest way to Gientofte. On their reaching that village, and when close under the churchyard wall, the Varsel sprang quickly over it, when instantly the Kirkegrim approached, and an obstinate battle ensued between them. After having fought for a while, they both sat down to rest, when the Varsel said to the peasant: "Did I stand up well?" The peasant answered: "No." The battle then commenced anew, and when they again sat down to rest the Varsel again asked: "Did I stand up well now?" and the peasant a second time answered: "No." The fight then recommenced, and the Varsel for the third time said: "Now! have I stood up well?" and on the peasant answering: "Yes," "It is well for thee,"

said the Varsel, "that thou hast answered so, for otherwise I would surely have broken thy neck."

At Niverød as a woman was going to milk her cows, she saw a corpse that had been washed up on the sand, and noticed that a large money-bag was bound round its body; and no one being near, she was tempted to take the money, to which she had as good a claim as any one else. But the next night the Strand-varsel came to the village and made a great noise before her window, desiring her to come out and follow him. Supposing that she had no alternative, she bade her children farewell and accompanied the Varsel. When they were outside of the village, the Varsel said to her: "Take me by the leg and draw me to the church." But the nearest church lay three-quarters of a mile distant. When the church appeared in sight, the Varsel said: "Let me go now; then go to the house by the church gate, and desire the people to sit up until thou comest again. When thou hast helped me over the churchyard wall, run as fast as thou canst, lest the Kirkegrim should seize thee." She did accordingly, and scarcely had the corpse been placed over the wall, when the Kirkegrim came out after the woman and seized her by the petticoat, which being old gave way, and so she slipt into the house in safety. From that time all went well with the woman, who lived contented with her children on the money she found on the Strand-varsel.

HYLDEMOER—ELDER.

There dwells in the elder-tree a being called Hyldemoer (Elder-mother) or Hyldeqvinde (Elder-wife). She avenges all injuries done to the tree. Of an elder standing in a small court in the Nyboder[1], it is related, that

[1] A quarter of Copenhagen, built for and inhabited by persons belonging to the navy.

at dusk it often moves up and down the court, and sometimes peeps through the window at the children, when they are alone. It is not advisable to have moveables of elder. A child having been laid in a cradle made of elder wood, the Hyldemoer came and pulled it by the legs, nor would she let it have any rest until it was taken out of the cradle. A peasant once heard his children crying in the night, and on inquiring the cause, was told that some one had been there and sucked them; and their breasts were found to be swollen. The cause of the annoyance was, it is said, that the room was boarded with elder.

This wonderful medicinal tree derives its name, it is supposed, from a healing deity named Hildi, who together with her spirits or subordinate deities, has her abode under its roots. From early times the Danes have loved and honoured the elder, and planted it by walls and fences.

The elder may not be cut without permission previously asked in these words: "Hyldemoer, Hyldemoer, allow me to cut thy branches." The peasants, when about to cut the tree, spit thrice, in order to drive away the Vætts and other evil beings.

THE WERWOLF.

A man, who from his childhood had been a Werwolf, when returning one night with his wife from a merry-making, observed that the hour was at hand when the evil usually came upon him; giving therefore the rein to his wife, he descended from the vehicle, saying to her: "If any one comes to thee, only strike at it with thy apron." He then withdrew, but immediately after, the woman, as she was sitting in the vehicle, was attacked by a Werwolf. She did as the man had enjoined her, and struck it with her apron, from which it bit a piece and ran off with it. After some time the man returned, holding in

his mouth the torn fragment of his wife's apron, on seeing which she cried out in terror: "Good Lord, man! why thou art a werwolf!" "Thank thee, mother!" said he, "but now I am free!" and from that time the evil never returned.

If a female at midnight stretches between four sticks the membrane that envelops the foal when it is brought forth, and creeps through it naked, she will bring forth children without pain; but all the boys will be Werwolves, and all the girls Maras. By day the Werwolf has the human form, though he may be known by the meeting of his eyebrows above the nose. At a certain time of the night he has the form of a dog on three legs. It is only when another person tells him that he is a Werwolf, or reproaches him with being such, that a man can be freed from the affliction.

Not only the belief in, but the name also of the Werwolf, has been transplanted to Normandy, where it is called le Warou or Warwou,

THE MARA.

A peasant had a sweetheart, who, without being herself conscious of it, was a Mara, and came every night to the man, so that he soon saw how the case was. He therefore kept watch, and having discovered that she crept in to him through a little hole in the door-post, he made a peg which fitted the hole, and when she came on the following night, he drove in the peg, so that she was compelled to remain within. She then assumed a human form, the man took her to wife, and they had many children. When many years had passed, and they were both advanced in life, it chanced one evening that the man cast his eye on the peg, which still remained in the hole, and asked his wife in joke whether she knew how she had entered the house? On her confessing her ignorance, he informed her, made himself right merry at the story, and even drew the peg

out, that she might see in what manner she had entered. The woman then peeped through the hole, but as she peeped she became on a sudden quite small, passed out through it, and from that time was never more seen.

There was once in Jutland a queen who was a great lover of horses; she had one in particular to which she was most attached, and which occupied her thoughts both waking and dreaming. It frequently happened, when the groom entered the stable at night, that he found this horse out of order, and thence concluded that it had been ridden by the Mara. Taking therefore a bucket of cold water, he cast it over the horse, and at the same moment saw that the queen was sitting on its back.

MERMEN AND MERWIVES.

In the neighbourhood of Assens in Fyen there once appeared an incredible number of Mermen and Merwomen on the strand. Aged fishermen relate how they often and often have seen the Merwives sitting there on large stones out in the water, with children at the breast, which they quickly cast on their backs when, terrified at the approach of man, they darted down into the water. It is further related, that in those places sea-cows and sea-bulls have been seen to land in the fields, seeking intercourse with other cattle.

In the year 1619 King Christian IV. sent two of his councillors, Oluf Rosenspar and Christian Holck, to Norway, there to hold a diet. On their return they captured a Merman. In form this Merman resembled a man. For a long time he rolled himself backwards and forwards, but at length lay as if he were dead. On one of the bystanders saying to him: "It must, indeed, be a wonderful God that has such human creatures also in the water," he answered: "Yes! if thou knewest that as well as I, then

mightest thou say so. But if ye do not instantly restore me to the water, neither the ship nor yourselves shall ever reach land." After this he would not utter a word, but was placed in the boat, and thence sprang into the water.

Out in Nordstrand there dwells a Merwife, who once drove her cattle up on the sea-shore, and let them graze the whole day on Tibirke Mark. This did not at all please the peasantry thereabouts, who for ages have been notorious for their covetousness; they therefore took measures for intercepting the cattle, whereby they succeeded in driving the Merwife with all her herd into an inclosure near the town, from which they would not allow her to escape until she had paid them for pasturage on their lands. Having assured them that she had no money to give, they required her to give them the girdle she wore round her body, which appeared very costly and shone as with precious stones. There being no alternative, she redeemed herself and cattle by giving them the girdle. But as she was driving her cattle down to the shore, she said to her large bull: "Rake up now!" Whereupon the animal began to throw up the earth with his horns and to cast up the sand along the sea-coast; and as the wind now blew from the north-west, the sand was drifted in over the country towards the village of Tibirke, so that the church was nearly buried under it. Of the costly girdle, too, they had but a short-lived gratification, for on returning home and examining it more closely, it was found to consist of worthless rushes.

In the diocese of Aarhuus there once dwelt two poor people who had an only daughter named Margaret, or Grethe. One day when she had been sent down to the sea-side to fetch sand, and was scooping it into her apron,

a Merman rose from the water. His beard was greener than the salt sea, he was of comely aspect, and spoke in friendly words to the girl, saying, "Follow me, Grethe! I will give thee as much silver as thy heart can desire." "That would not be amiss," answered she, "for we have not much of that article at home." So she suffered herself to be enticed, and he took her by the hand, and conducted her to the bottom of the ocean, where she became mother of five children.

After a long lapse of time, and when she had nearly forgotten her Christian belief, as she was sitting one holyday morning, rocking her youngest child in her lap, she heard the church bells ringing above her, and was seized with a strong fit of melancholy and longing after church; and as she sat and sighed with the tears rolling down her cheeks, the Merman, observing her sorrow, inquired the cause of it. She then besought him earnestly, with many expressions of affection, to allow her once more to go to church. The Merman could not withstand her affliction, but conducted her up to land, repeatedly exhorting her to return quickly to her children. In the middle of the sermon the Merman came outside of the church and cried "Grethe! Grethe!" She heard him plainly enough, but resolved within herself that she would stay and hear the sermon out. When the sermon was ended the Merman came a second time to the church, crying "Grethe! Grethe! art thou soon coming?" But she did not obey him. He came a third time, crying "Grethe! Grethe! art thou soon coming? Thy children are longing after thee." On finding that she did not come, he began to weep bitterly, and again descended to the bottom of the sea. But from that time Grethe continued with her parents, and let the Merman himself take care of the poor little children. His wail and lamentation are often to be heard from the deep.

The foregoing forms the subject of the old Danish ballad 'Agnete og

Havmanden' (Danske Viser, i. p. 313), also of two beautiful poems by Baggesen and Oehlenschlæger.

In the Farö islands the superstition is current that the seal casts off its skin every ninth night, assumes a human form, and dances and amuses itself like a human being, until it resumes its skin, and again becomes a seal. It once happened that a man passing during one of these transformations, and seeing the skin, took possession of it, when the seal, which was a female, not finding her skin to creep into, was obliged to continue in a human form, and being a comely person, the man made her his wife had several children by her, and they lived happily together, until, after a lapse of several years, she chanced to find her hidden skin, which she could not refrain from creeping into, and so became a seal again.

According to the old Danish ballad, a Mermaid foretold the death of Queen Dagmar, the wife of Valdemar II., surnamed Seier, or the Victorious. And in the Chronicle of Frederick II. of Denmark we read the following story: "In the year 1576 there came late in the autumn a simple old peasant from Samsö to the court, then being held at Kallundborg, who related that a beautiful female had more than once come to him while working in his field by the sea-shore, whose figure from the waist downwards resembled that of a fish, and who had solemnly and strictly enjoined him to go over and announce to the king, that as God had blessed his queen so that she was pregnant of a son (afterwards Christian IV., who should be numbered among the greatest princes of the North, and seeing that all sorts of sins were gaining ground in his kingdom, he, in honour of and in gratitude to God who had so blessed him, should with all earnestness and diligence wholly extirpate such sins, lest God should hereafter visit him with his anger and punishment."

Tales of Mermaids are most complete in the Shetland isles. There, it is said, that "they dwell among the fishes, in the depth of the ocean, in habitations of pearl and coral; that they resemble human beings, but greatly excel them in beauty. When they wish to visit the upper world, they put on the *ham* or garb of some fish, but woe to those who lose their ham, for then are all hopes of return annihilated, and they must stay where they are. Ve-Skeries (the sacred rocks) are a very favourite place with the fair children of the sea, who, undisturbed by men, here lay aside their *ham*, inspire the air of earth, and revel in the clear moonlight. As ocean's green-haired beauties are mortal, they are often, on their excursions, exposed to dangers; examples, indeed, are not wanting of their having been taken and killed by superstitious fishermen. It has also happened that earthly men have married Mermaids, having taken possession of their ham, and thus got them into their power[1]." A case

[1] Hibbert's Shetland quoted by Faye, pp. 60, 61. Thiele iii. p. 51. edit. 1820.

somewhat similar is that of Völund and his brothers and the three Valkyriur.

CHANGELINGS.

A man and his wife were sorely troubled with a changeling that had been left with them by the subterranean folk, who had carried off their genuine child, that had not been baptized in time. This changeling conducted himself in a most extraordinary way. When no one was present he was quite obstreperous, would run along the wall, sit in the cockloft, and shout and scream. But if any one was in the room with him, he would sit drowsy at the end of the table. He would eat as much as any four, and cared very little about what was set before him, yet was never satisfied. After having long thought how they should get rid of him, a shrewd female engaged to drive him from the house. One day, when he was out in the fields, she killed a pig, and made a pudding (sausage) of it, together with the skin and hair, which, on his return, she placed before him. As was his custom, he began slashing away at it, but as he ate he gradually became thoughtful, and at last sat quite still with the knife in his hand and eyeing the pudding: he then exclaimed, "Pudding with hide, and pudding with hair, pudding with eyes and pudding with bones in it. I have now seen thrice a young wood spring up on Tiis lake, but never before did I see such a pudding! The fiend will stay here no longer!" Saying these words he ran off and never returned.

There dwelt in Christiansö a man and his wife who neglected to have their child christened in proper time, in consequence of which a subterranean woman exchanged it for her own babe, which was so miserable a being that it could neither eat nor drink, and must inevitably have

perished, if the mother had not come every night to suckle it. Being greatly troubled and perplexed on account of this changeling, the woman at length hit on the following plan for getting rid of it. Having instructed her servant maid what she should ask and say, she heated the oven very hot, whereupon the girl, in a voice loud enough to be heard by the Troll-folk, said, "Why do you heat the oven so hot, Mistress?" To which the woman answered, "I am going to burn my child." When the girl had asked this question three times, and received the same answer, she took the changeling and laid it on the peel, as if about to thrust it into the oven. At this moment the subterranean woman rushed in, took her child from the peel, and returned the woman her own, with these words: "There is your child! I have done by it better than you have by mine." And, in fact, the child was, as she said, both thriving and strong.

HOW TO DISTINGUISH A CHANGELING.

When a child is born, the lights in the lying-in chamber must not be extinguished; for otherwise the infant may easily be exchanged by the underground folk. At a place in North Jutland, it happened many years ago in a lying-in room that the mother could get no sleep while the lights were burning. So the husband resolved to take the child in his arm, in order to keep strict watch over it as long as it was dark in the room. But unfortunately he fell asleep without having noticed in which arm he held his child, and on being waked by a shake of the arm, he saw a tall woman standing by the bed, and found that he had an infant in each arm. The woman instantly vanished, but there he lay, without knowing which of the two children was his own. In this difficulty he went to the priest, who advised him to get a wild stallion colt, which would enable him to discover the right one. They

accordingly procured such a wild colt, which was so unmanageable that three men could hardly lead it; then laid both infants wrapped up on the ground, and led the colt to smell to them. And it was curious to see how the colt each time that it smelt to the one, would lick it and was quite quiet, while every time that it smelt to the other it was restive and strove to kick the infant. By this method it was ascertained infallibly which was the changeling. While they were standing, there came suddenly a tall woman running, who snatched up the changeling and disappeared with it.

The Scotch too had their changelings, though they appear to have been of a far more social character than those of Scandinavia; at least if we may judge from the jovial little fellow described in Chambers (Pop. Rh. p. 55). A gudewife, named Tibbie Dickson, having occasion to go to the town of Dunse, left her babe (a changeling) in the care of her neighbour. Wullie Grieve, the tailor. 'So Wullie sits doon at the fire, and awa' wi' her yarn gaes the wife; but scarce had she steekit the door, an' wan half-way down the closs, whan the bairn cocks up on its doup in the cradle, and rounds in Wullie's lug. 'Wullie Tyler, an ye winna tell my mither whan she comes back, I'se play ye a bonnie spring on the bagpipes.' ..... So he rounds again in the bairn's lug, 'Play up, my doo (dove), an' I'se tell nacbody.' Wi' that, the fairy ripes amang the cradle strae, an' poos oot a pair o' pipes, sic as tyler Wullie ne'er had seen in a' his days—muntit wi' ivory, an' gold, an' silver, an' dymonts, an' what not ..... Wullie had nae great goo o' his performance; so he sits thinkin to himsel —'This maun be a deil's get; an' I ken weel hoo to treat them; an' gin I while the time awa, Auld Waughorn himsel may come to rock his son's cradle, an' play me some foul prank;' so he catches the bairn by the cuff o' the neck, and whupt him into the fire, bagpipes and a'!" Surely this little fellow did not deserve so cruel a fate[1].

Of another changeling it is related that, on seeing a huge fire kindled, with an egg-shell boiling on it, having one end of a measuring rod set in it, he crept out of the cradle on his hands, while his legs still remained in the cradle, and thus, stretching himself out longer and longer, he at length reached quite across the floor up the chimney, when he exclaimed: "Well! seven times have I seen the wood fall in Lessö forest, but never until now have seen so big a ladle in such a little pot[2]!"

[1] For other accounts see Keightley, F. M. p. 355.

[2] Asbjörnsen, Huldreeventyr, ii. 165.

Methods nearly similar of getting rid of a changeling are, with some modifications, amazingly wide-spread throughout almost the whole of Europe. In the Irish tradition, the boy, on seeing the egg-shells, exclaims: "Fifteen hundred years have I been in the world, yet have never seen that before." Walter Scott (Minstrelsy, ii. p. 173), quoting "A Pleasant Treatise on Witchcraft," relates of a woman who, to ascertain whether her child were a changeling, was advised to break a dozen eggs, and place the twenty-four half shells before it, then to go out and listen at the door; for if the child spoke, it was a changeling. She did accordingly and heard it say: "Seven years old was I when I came to the nurse, and four years have I lived since, and never saw so many milk-pans before." See also Waldron's Isle of Man, and Grimm, D. M. p. 438, for other accounts. Similar stories are told of Highland-Scotch and French changelings.

Various monstrous charms were resorted to in Scotland, for procuring the restoration of a child that had been so stolen; the most efficacious of which was supposed to be the roasting of the supposititious child upon the live embers, when, it was believed, it would vanish, and the true infant appear in the place whence it had been originally abstracted[1].

THE DEVIL.

FRIAR RUUS.

It is related that the devil once seeing how piously and virtuously the monks lived in the convent of Esrom[2], assumed a human form, and knocked at the gate of the convent for admission, saying his name was Ruus. He gave himself out for a scullion, and was received by the abbot as such. Being one day alone with the head cook, he resisted his authority, for which he received chastisement. At this he was sorely exasperated, and having just then a kettle of boiling water on the fire, he seized the head cook with all his might and set him on his head in the kettle; then ran out crying and lamenting the calamity that had befallen his master. Thus by his falsehood he deceived all the brethren in the convent, so that they regarded him as free from all suspicion and appointed him their head

[1] Scott's Minstrelsy, ii. 172.

[2] Formerly a celebrated monastery in the north of Seeland, not far from Fredensborg.

cook. Now this was precisely what Ruus had been aiming at, in order that he might corrupt the whole of the monks together. He now prepared viands so rich and delicate, that the monk forgot both prayer and fasting and resigned himself to luxury. It is even said that he introduced women into the convent, and thereby gained great favour with the abbot, who at length prevailed on him to enter the fraternity, as he wished to have such a cook constantly at hand. From that hour strife and wickedness so gained the upper hand in the convent that it would inevitably have fallen into the power of the evil one, if the brethren had not repented in time. For one day Brother Ruus being in the forest, saw there a beautiful fat cow, which he slaughtered and took a quarter of it to the convent; the remainder he hung up in a tree. When the owner of the cow missed it, and discovered three quarters of it hanging in the tree, he determined to keep watch in another tree, for the purpose of detecting the thief, when he came to fetch the rest. By this means he discovered how the devils played their pranks in the forest, and heard at the same time much talk about Friar Ruus, how he would invite the abbot and monks to a banquet in hell. The peasant being naturally exceedingly terrified at all this, went on the following day to the abbot, to whom he related all he had heard and seen in the forest. On hearing this the abbot summoned all the monks to meet him in the church, where they began to read and sing, so that Ruus, who could not endure either, endeavoured to sneak away; but the abbot seized him by the cowl and conjured him into a red horse, committing him to the power of hell. For many years after this event, Friar Ruus's iron pot and gridiron were shown in the convent of Esrom.

Before the conventual church was turned into a dwelling, the effigies of Friar Ruus and his epitaph, half Latin and half Danish, were to be seen there. His epitaph ran thus:

Hic jacet John Præst, (John priest)
Qui dedit suum graa Hest (gray horse)
Nec non de siligine tue Læst, (two lasts)
Semper comedebat det Bæst, (the best)
Requiescit in pulvere sud west. (south-west).

To the foregoing, Molbech, in his Ungdomsvandringer, adds that "the abbot afterwards constrained him to proceed to England, and without intermission to return, bringing with him, through the air, as much lead as amounted to 320,000 pounds weight, for the roof of the convent."

THE DEVIL AT CARDS.

Once on a Christmas eve a set of profane gamesters were sitting in Lemvig playing at cards for large sums, and as they became more and more excited by loss and gain, they became at the same time more and more unrestrained in their abominable cursing and swearing. When the night was somewhat advanced a knocking at the door was heard, and a well-dressed man entered, who begged permission to join the party. Having seated himself, he took the cards and began by losing a considerable sum. While they were thus sitting and playing, a card fell on the floor, and when one of the party, having taken a light, crept under the table to pick it up, he saw that claws protruded from the stranger's boots, whence it was evident that he was no other than the foul fiend, of whom it is well known that he can conceal everything except his claws. At this discovery a messenger was instantly despatched to fetch the priest, who came and found the stranger still at the table, where he sat counting his money. The priest, who was a sagacious man, knew him instantly, and commanded him to depart; but the fiend answered, that the men by their gambling and swearing had called him, and that he would not go before he had tasted warm blood. The priest thereupon took a little dog, that was running about the room, and threw it to him, which he eagerly tore in pieces and devoured, except-

ing three hairs, which he was obliged to leave behind. The priest having thus satisfied him, bored a hole with an awl in the lead of one of the windows, and commanded him to make himself little and pass through it; because if he passed out by the door, he could quickly enter again by the same way. This cost the priest much trouble; but he pressed him so hard with reading and exorcisms, that he was at length compelled to obey, though he howled so loud that it was heard over the whole town.

A SCHOLAR ASSIGNS HIMSELF TO THE DEVIL.

There was once a scholar in the school of Herlufsholm[1], who through the devil's craft was seduced to give himself up to his power and will. He therefore wrote a contract on a strip of paper with his own blood, and stuck it in a hole in the church wall. But for the salvation of his sinful soul, which the fiend would else have seized, it happened that another scholar of the school found the paper and took it to the rector. Now nothing was to be done but to have recourse to many prayers, whereby the devil's cunning was turned to naught; but it was long impossible to close up the hole in the wall so effectually that it was not immediately found open again.

THE DEVIL'S FOOTSTEP.

In a field near Sonneröd there is a row of stones, among which one has on it the mark of a footstep. Of this it is related, that the devil once rested his foot on it when he had carried a bride away from her bridegroom, and was obliged to wander far and wide with her before he could find a man, who for a hatful of money would take the bridal wreath from her head; for as long as she had

[1] Of Herlufsholm school see hereafter.

that on he had no power over her, the bridemaids having placed it on her head in the name of Jesus.

JENS PLOVGAARD.

In Söndre-Nissum, near Ringkiöbing [1], there dwelt a man named Jens Plovgaard, who was in league with the devil, and could therefore raise the dead and perform other feats of the kind, whereby he gained a considerable sum of money. But for this he was, on the other hand, after a certain number of years, to belong to the evil one. One day when he was absent from home, a fisherman from Thy came to ascertain what had become of a swine, but not meeting with Jens Plovgaard, and it being late, he slipt into the barn to sleep till the following morning, when he could accomplish his errand. In the middle of the night Jens returned home, who, on hearing that a man from Thy had been there to make inquiry of him concerning a lost swine, would immediately consult 'Eric [2],' and for that purpose went into the barn to raise him. The man, who was still awake, heard plainly how the devil was forced to obey. Jens asked him about the swine, but Eric would not utter a syllable, for he had observed that they were not alone; while Jens, on the other hand, ascribed his silence to sheer obstinacy, and therefore took his iron whip, with which he belaboured the fiend until he told him that the swine lay under an earth-slip, and described the place most accurately. When the fisherman heard this, he spared Jens Plovgaard all further trouble, and on his return dug in the slip, and found his swine.

The time at length arrived when the fiend, according to their compact, was to fetch Jens Plovgaard, who caused himself to be placed in a large cask together with an

[1] A small town on the west coast of Jutland.

[2] The devil, like our 'old Harry,' which is probably a corruption of the Danish term.

ample provision of meat and drink. This cask he caused to be buried in a field which was afterwards ploughed and sown. When the devil now came he could get no power over him, but ran backwards and forwards on the field every night for three weeks, and at last howled so terrifically that he might have been heard on the other side of the fiord as far as Ulfborg church. At the expiration of the three weeks Jens Plovgaard was free, and caused himself to be dug up; and from that time there was no man in the whole parish so pious as he; but his great cunning he possessed no longer.

HOW THE DEVIL ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE OUTWITTED.

In Jutland there was once a priest who knew more than his Paternoster. One evening there came a message to him from the manor-house, requiring his attendance there with the least delay possible, his aid being quite indispensable. The fact was that the proprietor, in order to attain to his vast riches, had sold himself to the devil, who was already there to fetch him, his time being expired. The priest, who arrived at the house just at the moment when the fiend was about to depart with the master, endeavoured to prevail on him to grant a further delay, first a year, then a month,—a week,—a day, but not even an hour would the fiend grant him. There stood on the table a little stump of wax candle nearly burnt out, pointing to which the priest said: "Thou wilt surely let him live as long as that stump lasts?" To this the fiend assented, but at the same moment the priest seizing the light, blew it out and put it into his pocket; so that for the present the fiend was obliged to leave the proprietor in peace, but who from that hour so amended his life that the devil got him not.

A similar artifice with a wax candle occurs in Norna Gest's Saga, whereby Norna Gest attains to an age of many hundred years. In the Popular Traditions and Tales of Poland, we find the devil allowing himself to be

tricked in the same manner. See also 'The Devil outwitted' in Netherlandish Popular Traditions.

THE LADY OF KIÖLBYGAARD.

On the road from Aalborg [1] to Thisted, through Östrel, there lies in a valley on the left a mansion called Kiölbygaard, in which there once dwelt a very rich lady, but who was as wicked as she was rich, and was, moreover, devoted to sorcery. One of her greatest delights was to hear that there were carousings and gaming at the inn on Sundays. Among the servants of the mansion there was one that stood high above others in her favour, to whom she frequently showed a large chest containing silver money, telling him that he might take as much of it as he would, but he was never able to raise a single piece from the chest. When he sometimes said that he wished he had so much money, because life must then be so joyous and pleasant, she always answered with a sigh: "Yes, true! were there no horrid death!"

One night one of her tenants came to the mansion to pay his rent, but found all in darkness, the family being in bed. He walked about the place until he came to a small apartment, in which he saw a light. On the middle of the floor he perceived a half-bushel measure, and immediately a dog of ferocious aspect entered the room, approached the measure and barked into it, and every time he barked there fell from his mouth several pieces of silver money into the measure, nor did he leave the place before it was quite full. A great desire now came over the man to take some of these silver coins, and he accordingly helped himself to thirty new pieces and put them into his purse. In the morning he went to the lady to pay his rent; but when she saw the new money, she declared that it had been taken from her. The man then told her what

[1] A considerable town in Jutland.

he had seen in the night, whereupon she was so terrified that she bestowed on him the farm which he had held on lease, in order to secure his silence as to what he had witnessed as long as he lived.

When this lady had for many years been leading so unrighteous a life, she one evening ordered her coachman to put the horses to, as she wished to take a drive. The man objected that it was so dark that he could not find the way, but she answered that the horses knew it well enough. She then for more than two hours rode over stock and stone, until the horses stopt before an illuminated mansion which the man had never observed before. They drove in, the lady alighted and went into the saloon which was illuminated. In the mean while the man waited with the carriage. After a considerable time had elapsed he stole up to the window and peeped in, and saw his mistress sitting on the middle of the floor undressed; by her side a pile was burning, and a man stood combing her hair. Immediately after the man received orders to drive home, but from that hour no one ever saw the lady more, and the coachman's belief was that she was on that night conveyed to hell. Her family, it is true, gave out that she returned home, and immediately after sickened and died; while others asserted that at her pompous funeral the coffin contained only a whisp of straw.

A FEAST WITH THE DEVIL.

In Östrel there once dwelt a man who entertained the suspicion that his wife was a witch, and one St. John's eve resolved to remove his doubts by watching whether she went to the devil's banquet. At night therefore he kept an eye on her movements, and saw her take from a drawer a small phial of ointment which she rubbed over a peel, then setting herself astride on the peel, she said: "Now in the devil's name!" and immediately at full speed flew

up through the chimney. Hereupon the man did as he had seen his wife do, and flew after her on another peel, and at length descended in a mansion, in which there was a room brilliantly illuminated and full of people. On his entrance he saw the devil going round and the witches sitting at table, at the head of which sat his own wife. The devil then came to him and inquired his business, to which he answered that he had followed his wife. 'Old Eric' then handed him a book that he might inscribe his name in it, which he did, but adding the words "in the name of God." When the fiend saw what he had written he uttered a howl, and the whole mansion fell down. On the following morning the man found himself in a hole out in the fields, among a heap of human bones; but his wife he never saw again.

A girl once by chance saw her mistress take a pot from the cupboard in which there was an ointment, with which she had no sooner anointed a broomstick, than with the broomstick between her legs she flew away up the chimney. The girl, full of wonder at what she had seen, took the same pot out of the cupboard to see what it contained, and rubbed a little of the ointment on a brewing vat, when instantaneously she with the vat also flew up through the chimney straightways to the Blocksberg, where there was a numerous assemblage of old women with base-viols and fiddles before them. The devil himself, whom they called Old Eric, when he had danced out a polonaise and paid the musicians, came to the girl with a book, in which he desired her to write her name; but she, instead of her name, first wrote the words with which it is usual to try the pen: 'Den, som mig föder,' etc.; the devil, consequently, was unable to take the book back, and would not dance again the whole evening, although he had previously been never

off the floor. Early on the following morning, which was St. John's day, all the old dames rode back on their broomsticks, and the girl in her brewing vat, until they came to a brook, across which the old women sprang very nimbly; but the girl hesitated and thought within herself: "It surely won't do to make such a jump with a brewing vat." But at last she said: "I can at any rate try." So giving the vat a kick, it sprang as lightly as the broomsticks themselves; at which the girl laughing, exclaimed: "That was a devil of a jump for a brewing vat!" But scarcely had she uttered the devil's name when the vat stopt, the book was away, and the good lass had to find her way back to Thisted on foot.

THE BOOK OF CYPRIANUS.

Cyprianus was a student, and by nature a gentle and orderly person, but he had passed through the Black School in Norway, and was therefore engaged to the devil to apply his learning and extraordinary faculties to the perpetration of evil. This grieved him in his latter years, his heart being good and pious; so to make the evil good again, he wrote a book, wherein he first shows how evil is to be done, and then how it may be remedied. The book begins by explaining what sorcery is, and with a warning against it. It is divided into three heads, viz. Cyprianus, Dr. Faustus, and Jacob Ramel. The last two parts are written in characters which are said to be Persian or Arabic, and also in ordinary characters. In this book are taught exorcising, laying and raising of spirits, and all that of which mention is made in the 5th book of Moses, xviii. 10, 11, 12. Whether this book has been printed is uncertain, but manuscript copies of it are concealed here and there among the common people, who regard it as something sacred. Those who possess the book of Cyprianus need never want money, they can read the devil

to them and from them, and no one can harm them, not even the devil himself. But whoever possesses the book cannot get rid of it; for whether he sells, burns or buries it, it will come back; and if a person cannot dispose of it before his death, it will go badly with him. The only method is, to write his name in it in his own blood, and lay it in a secret place in the church, together with four shillings clerk's fee.

The following is the German tradition of Cyprianus:

In ancient times there lived in one of the Danish isles a man named Cyprianus, who was worse than the devil; consequently, after he was dead and gone to hell, he was again cast forth by the devil and replaced on his isle. There he wrote nine books, in the old Danish tongue, on witchcraft and magical spells. Whosoever has read all these nine books through becomes the property of the devil. From the original work three (or nine) copies are said to have been made by a monk, and mutilated copies of these to have been dispersed all over the world. A count, who resided in the castle of Ploen [1], is said to have possessed a perfect copy, which he caused to be fastened with chains and buried under the castle; because in reading through eight books he was so troubled and terrified that he resolved on concealing it from the sight of the world. One of these books still exists in Flensborg [2]. Some spells from the nine books are still known among aged people. Whoever wishes to be initiated therein must first renounce his Christianity.

[1] The count here alluded to was, no doubt, Duke Hans Adolf of Holstein-Ploen, who was a great magician, and was finally carried off by the devil, through a window, though the matter was hushed up. He lived in the 17th century.

[2] A considerable town in Sleswig.

Two miles from Horsens [1] there dwelt a miller, who was a master in the black art and possessed the book of Cyprianus. A peasant having once stolen an axe from him, was obliged to bring it back at midnight, and was, moreover, borne so high in the air that his feet rattled among the tops of the trees in Bierre forest. This miller in fact performed so many wonderful things that all his neighbours were astonished at his feats. Impelled by curiosity, a journeyman miller once slipt into his master's private room, where having found an old quaint-looking volume, he began to read in it, when the horrible Satan appeared before him and asked his commands. The man, who was not aware that it was necessary to give the fiend some stiff job to execute, fell down in terror deprived of speech, and it would, no doubt, have been all over with him, had not his master entered at the moment and seen how matters stood. Snatching up the book, the miller instantly began to read in another place, in order, if possible, to drive the fiend away; but things had already gone too far, and nothing remained to be done but to give him something to do, so taking a sieve, he commanded him to bale water with it from the mill-pond; but being unable to do so, he was obliged to take his departure through the air, and left behind him a most loathsome stench.

Cyprian's book is also known in Normandy, where a similar story is told under the title of Le Grimoire du Curé. Calderon has made Cyprian the hero of one of his dramas, in which he appears as a native of Antioch.

OF WITCHES.

On St. John's eve the witches, as it is generally known, have a meeting with 'Old Eric,' though it rarely happens that others are witnesses of the spectacle.

[1] A considerable town in Jutland.

In Giörding near Ribe[1] there was once a serving-man, who on that night placed a green turf on his head, that he might be invisible to the witches, and so slipt into the churchyard. While standing quite secure and looking at the wonderful witch-dance round Old Eric, who sat in the middle, it happened that one of the women came quite close to him, when, in springing aside, the turf fell from his head. In an instant he became visible to all the witches, who started off in pursuit of him, and had not the priest happened to be standing just without his gate, he would hardly have escaped falling into their clutches.

In a certain house everything went perversely; for which reason the inhabitants sent to a well-known wise woman. She came and went about the house both within and without. At last she stood still before a large stone, which lay just without the dwelling. "This," said she, "should be rolled away." But all that they could do with levers and other means was to no purpose: the stone would not move. At length the wise woman herself hobbled up to the stone, and scarcely had she touched it before it moved from its old station. Beneath was found a silken purse filled with the claws of cocks and eagles, human hair and nails. "Put it into the fire together with a good bundle of pea-straw, that it may catch quickly," said the old woman; and no sooner was this said than done. But the moment the fire began to take effect it began to howl and hiss as if the very house were ready to fall, and people who stood out in the fields hard by plainly saw a witch sally forth on her broomstick from

[1] A city on the west side of Jutland, with a fine old cathedral, said to be the first church in Denmark. The early kings frequently kept their court at Ribe.

the mouth of the oven. At the same moment the old woman died, who, it was supposed, had bewitched the house, and all the sorcery was at an end.

In the neighbourhood of Östrel a man served at a farm, the mistress of which unknown to him was a witch. Although she gave him good and wholesome food, he never thrived, but became thinner every day. At this being much troubled, he went to a wise man, to whom he communicated his case. From this man he learned that his mistress was a witch, and that at night, while he slept, she transformed him into a horse, and rode upon him to Troms church in Norway; so that it was not to be wondered at that his strength decreased. The wise man at the same time gave him an ointment with which to rub his head at night; then when he fell asleep he would have a violent itching on his head, when he would wake and see that he was standing outside of Troms church. The man did as he had been directed, and on waking the following night, he was standing by Troms church holding a bridle in his hand, which he had torn off in scratching his head; and behind him he saw many horses bound together by each other's tail. When he had for some time stood thus without the church door, his mistress came out and cast a friendly look at him; but he nodded for her to come nearer, and when she came he cast the bridle over her head, when instantly she was transformed into a handsome mare. He then mounted the mare and rode homewards. On his way he called at a farrier's and caused him to put four new shoes on the mare. On reaching home, he told his master that he had been out to buy a capital mare, which would go well with the one he already had. The master bought her of him for a good round sum; but when he took the bridle off, the mare disappeared and the

mistress stood in her place with new horseshoes on her hands and feet. Then the man related all that had taken place; the wife was in consequence turned out of doors, and never got the horseshoes off her hands and feet.

The North Germans have a story (The Witch with the bridle) very nearly resembling the foregoing. Müllenhoff, No. 310.

In Östrel there was at one time a vast number of witches. A huntsman, who was in the habit of passing by the farm of Baller, always observed in the neighbourhood either a hare or a wild duck; yet, notwithstanding that he shot (and was a sure shot), he never could hit either the one or the other. He once saw a duck lying in the water close by the farm, at which he shot many times, but the duck remained quite still and seemed not to notice the firing. As now neither shot nor slug would hit it, he cut a silver button from his jacket, said three *Aves* over it and put it into his piece. Now he hit the duck, which, however, flew out of the water into the farm, and hid itself in the poultry-house. The huntsman followed and told the people, who were sitting at supper, what he had done, and demanded the duck he had shot. The master told him he might go into the kitchen and speak to the servant maid, who would see to get him his duck. When he entered the kitchen there sat an ugly old beldam by the chimney, with only one shoe on, while the blood was running down her leg. She said she had fallen down and cut herself, but the huntsman knew instantly that it was the witch that he had shot, and hurried out of the place with all possible speed.

At Bröndsted Mark, in the diocese of Ribe, there is shown a spot near the forest, where in former days a castle is said to have stood. In this castle dwelt a lady who

was a witch, and one day when all the men of Bröndsted were at the chase, she, in the form of a hare, it is said, kept constantly teazing and tantalizing them, until an old peasant, wiser than the others, took a silver button, loaded his piece with it, and shot the hare in the leg. The following day it was rumoured that the lady was sick. She never appeared again.

Two men from Svendstrup near Aalborg went out one night to shoot hares in the churchyard. For this purpose they stationed themselves in the church tower, expecting that game of some sort would appear, but in vain. At midnight, however, a swarm of hares burst forth from all the graves; but although the men at first ventured to shoot at them, not a single one fell, and their number so increased that the whole churchyard was completely hidden under their countless multitude. The men were then seized with a sudden terror, and with difficulty escaped unscathed.

On Bornholm it is related that the witches make a kind of hare of old legs of stockings, with three harrow-prongs instead of legs. These hares, which they call 'smörbarrer,' are sent by the witches to fetch milk from their neighbours' cattle. Hares used by the witches to milk cattle are also known in Sweden.

In the parish of Vissenberg in Fyen there was once a woman who was generally regarded as a witch. When at the point of death she could not divest herself of life; but another cunning woman, who was present, advised that straw should be placed under the chair in which the dying woman sat; for if she were a witch, she must die immediately afterwards, this means having never been known to fail. This advice was followed and the woman died shortly after.

THE SHIP-MASTER OF AARHUUS[1] AND THE FINLAP.

A shipmaster from Aarhuus was once lying at Drontheim, where he formed an acquaintance with a Finlap, who often came on board to visit him. This Finlap, who could perform many sorceries, offered, among other things, to teach the shipmaster how to procure a wind. This, thought the skipper, might be very convenient, and the next day the Finlap brought a bag with him, which he placed outside of the cabin, saying, that he needed only to take that with him, and he could make any wind. But the shipmaster on reflection would have no concern with it, suspecting that it came from the devil. The Finlap then asked him whether he wished to know how his wife and children were. On the skipper answering in the affirmative, the Finlap immediately fell down on the deck as if dead. After some time he rose, saying: "I have been to Aarhuus. Thy wife was sitting drinking coffee; the others were also in good health, though one of the children had been ill. That thou mayest believe my words, —dost thou know this?" at the same time handing him a silver spoon. "This," said the other, "thou hast taken from my house in Aarhuus." And so saying took the spoon and kept it.

After they had been lying some time at Drontheim, the Finlap one morning said: "To-morrow we shall be under sail, and shall both have a good wind, although you are going southward and I northward. And I will further tell you that you will not go to Christiania fiord, to purchase a lading, as you think; but will get a better freight than you expect." On the following morning both were under sail, and the wind changed so that the Jutlander had a fair wind for twelve hours, and afterwards the Fin for twelve hours. When off the isles of Öster-Riis the

[1] A city on the east coast of Jutland, with a spacious old cathedral.

wind for the Jutlander was directly adverse, so that after having beaten about for nights and days, he was at last obliged to seek a port in the Öster-Riis islands. There one merchant outbid another in their offers of freight, but being eastward bound for a cargo, he declined their proposals, until a merchant at length offered him a freight to the Issefiord which almost equalled the value of a whole lading. This he could not withstand, but wrote to his owners, that for weighty considerations he had not followed their orders, an announcement which among the parties interested in Aarhuus excited the suspicion that he had lost his wits. On his arrival home after this trip, and when just stepping on shore, being questioned about his freight, he answered: "I have it in my fob." This proved highly satisfactory. On coming home to his wife, he inquired: "How are all here?"—"Well," was the answer.—"Has any one been ill?"—"Yes, the young one."—"Have you lost anything?"—"No—yes—no."—"Think again."—"Yes, a silver spoon."—"There it is,"—said the skipper, laying it on the table.

OF FRIT SKUD.

To acquire 'Frit Skud,' that is, always to hit the mark aimed at, some lay certain prayers or secret words under the chamber of the piece. Others effect the same by letting the wind on a Thursday morning blow into the barrel. Such certain shooters are in league either with the evil one or with the wild huntsman, and whether they shoot to the east or to the west, their shot always brings them game of some kind.

On the manor of Thiele in Jutland there was once an old keeper, who often when out sporting, especially when he was rather drunk, would turn the piece backwards and fire it off; and he never did so without bringing down game.

TRADITIONS OF SPECTRES.

THE FLYING HUNTSMAN.

All over the country a terrific apparition makes its appearance, of which every one who has either seen or heard it speaks with shuddering. It occurs at various times that a rushing and buzzing, a shouting and uproar, a cracking and rattling are heard in the air, precisely as if a hunting party, with echoing horns, dogs with outstretched necks, and wild huntsmen, were galloping through the fields and forests. It is THE FLYING HUNTSMAN, says the peasant, laying himself on his face on the earth, or hiding himself behind a tree, until the hellish band has passed.

GRÖN-JETTE.

On the west side of Möen there is a forest called Grönvæld, in which Grön-Jette (Green-giant [1]) hunts every night on horseback, with his head under his left arm, a spear in his hand, and many hounds around him. At harvest time the peasants leave a bundle of oats for his horse, that it may not trample down their grain in the night. Grönsund is named from him, as Phanefiörd is called after Phane, his betrothed. Near Frendrup a large stone is to be seen, which is said to have been Grön-Jette's sleeping place; and in the parish of Aastrup on Falster[2] are several mounds, in which those whom Grön-Jette has slain with his spear lie buried. But Grön-Jette and Phane lie buried on Harbölle Mark, in Stege parish, where a giant-grave is shown, a hundred and seventy ells long.

[1] The first component of this name Grimm (D. M. p. 896) considers to be the O. Nor. Grön (beard), and the entire name as identical with the O. Nor. Graniötunn, *the bearded giant*, without any allusion to the colour of his clothing.

[2] One of the small Danish islands near Möen.

One night when Grön-Jette was hunting in Borre-Skov, he stopped his horse before Henrik Fyenboe's door, knocked, and ordered him to hold his dogs. He then rode away, Henrik Fyenboe standing in the mean while at his door holding the dogs for two hours. At length Grön-Jette returned with a mermaid lying across his horse, which he had shot, and said to the peasant: "After her I have been hunting these seven years; but now I got her down by Falster." He then asked for something to drink, having got which, he handed a gold coin to Henrik Fyenboe, which burnt a hole through his hand and disappeared on the earth. The huntsman then laughing said: "Now thou canst say that Grön-Jette has held out his hand to thee. But that thou mayest not say that I have drunk at thy cost, take the band with which thou hast held the dogs." He thereupon rode away, and Henrik took the band, which he long held under lock and key, and from that time increased in affluence; but at length, when he thought little of it, he became poorer than he had ever been, and died in great misery.

In former times it was a superstition in Möen to leave a sheaf standing of the last stack that was housed; but at a later period, that the last sheaf of oats that was bound up should be thrown into the field with these words: "This is for the Jöde of Upsala[1]; this he shall have for his horse on Christmas eve." They believed that if they neglected this, their cattle would die. In Norway the custom prevailed of setting a sheaf on a pole for the birds, on Christmas eve.

PALNE-JÆGER, OR PALNE THE HUNTER.

Like as King Valdemar hunts by night in Seeland does Palne the Hunter[2] hunt in Fyen; and it is related that a man, who, about a hundred years since, dwelt near Odense, once fell in with him. For when this man was one night gone with his people to bind barley, there came to him a

[1] See page 124.

[2] Palnatoki, the founder of Jomsborg.

tall and comely female, who asked: "Have ye seen anything of Palne-Jæger?" And on their answering that they had not seen him, she hastened through the wood. But an hour had scarcely elapsed when Palne-Jæger came to the same people, with helmet and waving plume on his head, a bow on his left and a quiver on his right shoulder, and sandals on his feet. He inquired: "Have ye seen anything of Langpatte?" And when they had given him the best intelligence they could, he hastened after her. He did not, however, catch her that night, as the same happened to the harvest people on the night following.

Every new year's night Palne-Jæger fetches three horse-shoes from one or other smithy in Fyen, and the smiths forget not to lay them ready for him on the anvil, as he always leaves three golden horse-shoes in their stead. But if he comes to any smithy and does not find shoes, he removes the anvil, as it once happened to a smith in Korup, whose huge anvil Palne-Jæger moved up into the tower of Seden church, whence the smith had great difficulty in getting it down again.

HORNS JÆGER.

In the neighbourhood of Aarhuus Horns Jæger hunts by night, to extirpate all the Elf-wives. Early one morning a man from Lyngen, who was out in the field to remove his horses, heard with terror a rustling in the air, and immediately saw a man on horseback coming towards him. It was Horns Jæger, and he had with him three hounds bound with a silken cord. "Hold my dogs," cried he to the terrified peasant, and then again rode off; but returned shortly after, having two Elf-wives hanging across the horse's neck, who were bound together by their long hair. "Give me my dogs now," cried he to the

peasant, "and hold forth thy hand for drink-money." The man did so, but the huntsman only put the end of three fingers into his hand, and having thus burnt him, rode away with the two howling Elf-wives.

JONS JÆGER.

In the neighbourhood of Aalborg Jons Jæger often rides through the air, followed by a number of hounds that run on the earth. Whoever meets him must lie down flat, else he would be sick afterwards. Sometimes this huntsman may be heard calling his dogs with a horrid scream. If he happens to pass over a house in which two doors opposite each other stand open, his dogs pass through them; and if, at the same time, brewing or baking is going on in the house, it will all be spoiled.

KING ABEL'S HUNT.

In Sleswig it is the Danish king Abel, the fratricide, that leads the Wild-hunt, who in an expedition against the Frieslanders (A. 1252) sank into a deep morass as he was fording the Eyder, where, being encumbered with the weight of his armour, he was slain. His body was buried in the cathedral, but his spirit found no rest. The canons dug up the corpse, and buried it in a morass near Gottorp, "but in the place where he is buried and the neighbourhood, even within our own memory, horrid sounds and shrieks are heard, by which travellers by night are often terrified and rendered almost lifeless. Many persons worthy of credit relate and affirm that they have heard sounds so resembling a huntsman's horn, that any one would say that a hunter was hunting there, and which the usual night-watch at Gottorp have frequently heard. It is, indeed, the general rumour that Abel has appeared to many in our time, black of aspect, riding on a small

horse, and accompanied by three hounds, which appear to be burning like fire[1]."

King Abel was buried in St. Peter's church at Sleswig, but on account of his cruel fratricide he could find no rest in the grave. By night he haunted the church and disturbed the monks at their prayers, so that at length it was found necessary to take up his body and sink it in a morass near Gottorp. To keep him in the grave, a sharp stake was driven down in the earth through him. The place is still known by the name of the king's grave. He nevertheless rides every night on a black horse, accompanied by a leash of dogs. Then is to be heard a slamming of gates, besides a terrific shouting and screaming, so that all who hear it are struck with fear.

Some ropemakers in Sönderborg once undertook to stop him, by stretching a rope across the street; but when he came, everything gave way before him.

In Sweden, when a noise, like that of carriages and horses, is heard by night, the people say: "Odin is passing by[2]."

KING VALDEMAR'S HUNT.

In Seeland it is King Valdemar[3] who rides, of whom a story is told similar to one related of Charlemagne. King Valdemar loved a lady from Rügen named Tovelille[4], at whose death his sorrow was so great that he could not quit her corpse, but had it carried with him whithersoever he went. This being found inconvenient to those about

[1] J. Cypræi Ann. Episcopor. Slesv. p. 267, quoted by Thiele, i. p. 187, edit. 1820.

[2] Geijer, Sv. Rikes Häfd. i. p. 268.

[3] Valdemar IV. of Denmark, surnamed Atterdag; he reigned from 1334 to 1375, and was the last male descendant of King Svend Estrithson, the nephew of Cnut the Great, by his sister Estrith, married to Ulf Jarl.

[4] Tovelille, i. e. the little dove. In like manner, Christian the Second's celebrated mistress was called Dyveke, signifying the same in Low German. She was of Dutch extraction.

the king, one of the courtiers seized a favourable moment to ascertain what it was that so attracted him to the dead body. He found on her finger an enchanted ring, which had been placed there by her mother, that even after death she might retain the love of Valdemar. The courtier took the ring from her finger, and the king's affection was instantly transferred from the dead lady to himself, who had retained the ring in his possession; so that whatever was to be done was to be done by or through him. This at length becoming exceedingly irksome to him, and as he knew that it was to the ring he was indebted for the king's favour, he threw it into a marsh as he was one day riding through Gurre wood. From that moment the king began to find more pleasure in the wood than in any other place. He caused the castle of Gurre to be built, and hunted in the wood day and night; at the same time it became a habit with him to utter the words which afterwards proved his curse: that God was welcome to keep heaven, if he might only hunt in Gurre.

He now rides every night from Burre to Gurre, and is known over all the country as the flying huntsman. In some places he is called the flying Marcolfus. When he approaches, great shouting and uproar and cracking of whips are heard in the air; the people then step aside and place themselves behind the trees. First come his coal-black hounds, which run on all sides snuffing the ground, with long red-hot tongues hanging out of their mouths. Then comes 'Wolmar' on his white horse, sometimes holding his own head under the left arm. When he meets any one, especially an old person, he commands him to hold a couple of his hounds, and makes him either stand with them for several hours, or loose them immediately after a shot, on hearing which they break from all bonds and chains. When he is thus riding onwards, he is heard to slam the gates after him; and in many places where

there is a passage through a farm, he rides in at one gate and out at the other, and no locks or bolts are so strong as not to fly open at his approach. In some places he takes his course even over the house-tops, and in the neighbourhood of Herlufsholm there is said to be a house, the roof of which is considerably sunk in the middle, because he so often passes over it. In the north of Seeland he has another Gurre, where there are ruins, which are still called Valdemar's castle. It is a custom here for the old women, at St. John's tide, to go out at night on the road, and open the gates for him. About two miles from Gurre is Valdemar's mount, surrounded by water. Here, according to the tradition, six priests in black walk every midnight, muttering over the islet. Between Söllerød and Nærum, he hunts with black dogs and horses, on the road called Wolmar's way.

Having thus roamed about, he rests alternately at many places in the country. It is particularly related that he stops at Vallö castle, where he has a bedchamber, in which there stood two ready-made beds. Here he passes the night in the form of a black dog. In the same room stand two large chests, which, on being once opened, were found full of small round pieces of leather; "for better money they had not in King Wolmar's time." A subterraneous passage is said to connect Vallö castle with Töllösegaard, in the district (amt) of Holbek. Here he is also said to have had a chamber, and formerly even a maid-servant was kept to wait on him. Sometimes he rests at Vordingborg, in 'Valdemar's Tower,' or among the ruins of 'Valdemar's Castle,' where young females and persons from his time are often seen to go and make beds. A peasant, who would not believe that the king thus came to his tower in the night, ventured once to pass the night there; but at midnight, in walked King Valdemar to him, greeted him in a friendly manner, and said, "Thou hast

my thanks for taking care of my tower," at the same time holding out to him a gold coin, but which, when the peasant took it, burnt a round hole through his hand, and fell like a coal to the ground. From this dreadful money, an idea may be formed of what his sufferings must be. It sometimes happens, when an old man or woman has faithfully held his dogs for many hours, that he throws them something that appears like coal, and is, therefore, disregarded, but when examined, is found to be pure gold.

PUNISHMENT FOR REMOVING LAND-MARKS.

Before the permanent allotment of lands, to every peasant, in sowing time, so much of the field or mark was assigned as was just and appropriate, and boundary-posts were driven between his and his neighbour's allotment. Whoever removed such marks, though he might escape punishment in this world, could find no rest in the grave, but by way of penalty must plough every night on the spot where his sin lay hidden. Of such ploughmen it is said, that when any person came near, they compelled him to drive their horses; and if any one were so forced into their service, there was no other way to get free again than to take notice of the place where he began, and after the first turn to cast away the reins. He might then pursue his way unscathed.

Near Skive lies the manor of Krabbesholm, where there once dwelt a lady who wished to appropriate to herself an adjacent field, and therefore caused her overseer to put earth from the garden at Krabbesholm into his wooden shoes, with which he went to the field in dispute, and swore that he stood on the soil of Krabbesholm. The field was adjudged to the lady, but afterwards the overseer could not die before she had given it back; yet he, nevertheless,

every night still goes round the field with earth in his wooden shoes.

Three men belonging to Spandet, in North Sleswig, swore away the beautiful meadow of Elkjær from the village of Fjersted; in lieu of which the villagers got the inferior one of Sepkjær. They had also put earth in their shoes. After their death they were long to be seen wandering about the meadow, wringing their hands and crying:

Med Ret og Skjel,	By law and right,
Det ved vi vel,	That know we well,
Elkjær ligger til Fjersted By,	Elkjær belongs to Fjersted town.
Sepkjær ligger til Spandet.	Sepkjær belongs to Spandet.

Near Ebeltoft dwelt a peasant who possessed land and cattle in superabundance, paid taxes both to church and state, brought his tithes at the right time, gave to the poor, and went every Sunday to church; yet, notwithstanding all this, there was not an individual in the whole neighbourhood that placed any real confidence in him. He died and was buried, but after having lain in the earth until harvest time, he was heard at night crying piteously over the field: "Boundary here! boundary there!" Now people discovered how in his lifetime he had acquired his wealth.

A SUNDAY'S CHILD.

In Fyen there was a woman who was born on a Sunday, and, like other Sunday's children, had the faculty of seeing much that was hidden from others. But because, in consequence of this property, she could not pass by the church at night without seeing either a hearse or a spectre, the gift became a perfect burthen to her. She therefore

took the advice of a man skilled in such matters, who directed her, whenever she saw a spectre, to say: "Go to heaven," but when she met a hearse, "Hang on." Happening some time after to meet a hearse, she, through lapse of memory, cried out: "Go to heaven!" and straightway the hearse rose up in the air and vanished. Afterwards meeting a spectre, she said to it: "Hang on!" when the spectre clung round her neck, hung on her back, and drove her down into the earth before it. For three days her shrieks were heard, before the spectre could put an end to her wretched life.

SPECTRES IN ST. KNUD'S CHURCH AT ODENSE [1].

A man in Odense was once desirous of knowing what took place in the church in the night-time, and therefore one evening went into St. Knud's, where he remained. At midnight he saw a spectre come forth from one of the graves holding a long wax taper, with which it went about and lighted all the candles in the church. Shortly after there came one spectre after another walking slowly from their graves, and placed themselves in the seats, among whom the man lying in concealment recognised many a good old friend. At length came a spectre in priestly attire, ascended the pulpit, and preached a sermon in an unknown tongue, until day began to dawn.

HANS NÆB.

In the village of Qværndrup in Fyen there was once a horrible spectre, which caused great fear and disquietude throughout the whole parish; as every one that saw it died immediately after. This spectre had assumed the likeness of a dead man called Hans Næb, and when it appeared to any one, it was always with the cry: "Look at Hans

[1] The chief town of the island of Fyen.

Næb!" All the men in the place and then the women were already dead, and the turn now came to the young ones. In this impending danger a young fellow offered to encounter the apparition and endeavour to drive it away. For this purpose he went at midnight to the church path, through which the spectre was in the habit of passing, having previously provided himself with steel in various shapes. When the apparition approached, he fearlessly threw steel before its feet, so that it was obliged instantly to turn back, and appeared no more in the parish. But the young man being satisfied that it really was Hans Næb, it was resolved to open his grave, to see if anything were amiss, when it was found that he was lying on his face in the coffin, whence it was evident to all that with his cry of "Look at Hans Næb" he had only wished to cause them to lay him on his back, it being well known that a corpse cannot have peace in the grave when it lies otherwise.

A SAGACIOUS WOMAN.

Near Lille Værlöse in Seeland there once dwelt a farmer who associated with thieves and robbers, never went to church, and was in bad repute among all for his impiety. When he was dead and buried, and the funeral procession had returned from the church to drink 'grave beer' at the house of the deceased, they saw him sitting on the roof staring down on all who ventured to look up at him, so that scarcely one remained behind, all leaving the place as quickly as possible. At length came the priest, who began reading, and exorcised him down into Kalsmose hard by Farum lake; and that he might continue there till the world's end, a sharp stake was driven into the earth so that it just met his head. While all this was being done, an old crone chanced to be present who understood these matters better than the priest himself,

and who taking a darning needle without an eye, stuck it into the stake. At this the spectre cried out from beneath: "Thou shouldst not have done that, thou old witch! I should else have been at home before thee!" But now he is obliged to remain beneath, yet he flies about every night, and is a night-raven until cock-crowing.

MASTER MADS AND HERR ANDERS.

Master Mads, the priest of Lumby, was full of shrewdness and cunning. He once said that the dead were liable to thirst, and caused a cask of beer to be brought to the funerals within the church, and when, some days after, the beer was looked after, it was all drunk out. Many persons now conceived all sorts of opinions concerning him, and certain it is, that when Master Mads was dead he re-appeared. His successor, Herr Anders, who was no less shrewd than Master Mads, undertook to exorcise his spirit, wheresoever it might chance to be. One night, therefore, he went out into the field which is now called the Pilelykke, taking with him three large books. There sure enough he met with Master Mads, with whom he had a hard struggle, and was hardly able to answer all the questions put to him by the learned sprite. So at length he had recourse to reading out of one of his books, which Master Mads, however, knocked out of his hand. In all haste Herr Anders then drew forth the second book, and again began to read; but the spectre struck this also out of his hand, saying: "When thou wast a lad thou didst once steal a wheaten loaf in Elsinore." But Herr Anders lost no time in throwing two skillings to him, answering, that with that it would be paid. At the same time he took forth the third book, from which he read so impressively that Master Mads found himself under the necessity of creeping into the earth at the spot where he was standing, and where a sharp stake of oak was driven to

hold him down. Old folks say that they have seen the stake in its place, adding that on shaking it to and fro, a voice was always heard from beneath, crying: "Pull it up! Pull it up!"

OF DRAGONS.

About a mile and a quarter from Sorö [1] stands Alsted church, in which there is still to be seen a picture representing a fight between a bull and a dragon, in commemoration, as people say, of an event which took place in the churchyard. According to the tradition, a dragon had taken up his abode near the church gate, and done great injury to the people, so that no one could enter the church, when an ancient wise man gave his advice, that a bull-calf should be reared with pure sweet milk, and after a certain time be set to fight with the serpent. At the end of the first year, the young bull was so strong, that every one thought it might stand the encounter; but on seeing the serpent, it was so terrified, that it was found necessary to feed it in the same manner for another year. It was then less timid, but would not engage in combat until the end of the third year, when it proved so bold and vigorous that it instantly engaged in the conflict and killed the dragon. But the bull was so envenomed that it was found necessary to kill it also, and bury it together with the dragon.

There is a tradition nearly similar of a dragon in the churchyard of Lyngby, a village near Copenhagen.

Two miles from Aalborg are two mounts called Östbierg Bakker. Here many years since a dragon had his abode, and caused great affliction in the neighbourhood. At length there came a man skilled in the knowledge of serpents, who engaged to destroy the dragon. He caused a

[1] A town in the west of Seeland, famed for its academy.

pile to be raised, and when it was kindled, mounted a courageous horse and rode up to the monster, which followed him whithersoever he rode, and thus came at length to the pile. The man then rode over the pile and the dragon crept after him through the midst of the fire. He then sprang a second time over the pile, and the serpent crept after him a second time. When he had thus ridden unscathed seven times over the fire, and the dragon had crept seven times through it, it was completely consumed.

THE DAM-HORSE.

Once when some peasant children from Hirschholm [1] were playing by Agersö there sprang suddenly up from the water a large white 'dam-horse,' and galloped about the field. The boys ran to look at it, and one of them ventured to set himself on its back; but in the same moment the horse darted off and was about to plunge into the lake, when the boy luckily exclaimed:—

> "Lord Jesus' cross!
> I never saw a larger horse!"

and it instantly vanished from under him.

To the north of Thisted [2] lies the village of Brund. From this village as three drunken peasants were crossing a field called Kronens Mark, one of them expressed a wish for a horse on which they could all ride home together, when suddenly an immensely large black horse stood before them, on whose back they thought they might all very well find room; but when two of them were mounted, the third in wonder cried out:

[1] A village about eight miles north of Copenhagen.
[2] A little town on the Limfiord in the north of Jutland.

"Lord Jesus' cross!
Never saw I such a horse!"

At the same moment the horse vanished, and there lay the three sprawling on the ground.

In France the dam-horse is known by the name of the *Lutin*, and in the Shetland isles it is called the *Shoopiltee*. In both places it is said to appear as a little horse, which, when any one has set himself on its back, rushes with him into the water.

THE HEL-HORSE.

In every churchyard in former days, before any human body was buried in it, a living horse was interred. This horse re-appears and is known by the name of the 'Hel-horse.' It has only three legs, and if any one meets it, it forebodes death. Hence is derived the saying when any one has survived a dangerous illness: "He gave death a peck of oats," (as an offering or bribe).

In the cathedral yard at Aarhuus there is a Hel-horse, which sometimes makes its appearance. A man, whose windows looked into the cathedral yard, exclaimed one evening as he sat in his apartment: "What horse is that outside?" "It is perhaps the Hel-horse," answered one sitting by him. "Then I will see it!" said the man. While looking out of the window he grew as pale as a corpse; but he never mentioned afterwards what he had seen. Shortly after he fell sick and died.

Hel is identical with Death, and in times of pestilence rides about on a three-legged horse, and strangles people; whence when a sickness rages it is said that "Hel is going about;" or when in the night the dogs bark and howl, "Hel is among the dogs;" when the sickness begins in a place, "Hel is come;" or when it ceases, "Hel is driven away." Hel can be driven from one place to another; instances of this are related and persons named who have driven Hel from this or that town or village. When any one lies sick to death, it is said: "He has his Helsot" (mortal sickness); if he recovers it is said: "He has settled matters with Hel." When any one stays out too long on an errand, people to this day say: "You are a good one to send after Hel[1]."

[1] Müllenhoff, p. 244.

THE CHURCH-LAMB[1].

When any one enters a church alone and when there is no service, it often happens that he sees the Church-lamb running about; for the church is built over a lamb, that it may not sink. Formerly, when a church was being built, it was customary to bury a living lamb under the altar, that the building might stand immoveable. This lamb's apparition is known by the name of the Church-lamb; and if a little child is to die, the Church-lamb is seen to dance on the threshold of the house.

In all Fyen there is only one church that has its Church-lamb, while each of the others has its Church-sow. The custom of burying a living animal, that a church or a house may stand firm, extends itself to other animals besides a lamb, of which a swine and poultry are oftenest mentioned[2].

THE GRAVE-SOW.

In the streets of Eröskiobing[3] there is often seen a Grave-sow, or, as it is also called, a Gray sow. This is said to be the apparition of a sow formerly buried alive, and when it appears, to forebode death and calamity.

THE NIGHT-RAVEN.

Every exorcised spirit becomes, according to tradition, a Night-raven. At the spot where a spirit has been exorcised, a sharp stake is driven into the earth, which passes through the left wing of the raven, causing a hole in it. It is only through the most frightful swamps and morasses that the Night-raven ascends. It first begins under the earth with the cry of "Rok! rok!" then "Rok op! rok

[1] See page 102.

[2] In building the new bridge at Halle, which was completed only in 1843, the people thought it would be requisite to immure a child in the foundation! Grimm, D. M. p. 1095.

[3] A town on the north side of Erö, a small island on the south of Fyen.

op!" and when it has thus come forth, it flies away screaming "Hei! hei! he!—i!" When it has flown up it resembles a cross, and at first hops on the ground like a magpie, and cries "Bav! Bav! Bav!" It afterwards flies towards the east, to approach the holy sepulchre, because if it can come thither, it will get rest. When it flies over head, care must be taken not to look up; for if any one sees through the hole in its left wing, he himself becomes a night-raven, and the night-raven is released. In general the night-raven is harmless, and strives only to go farther and farther towards the east.

THE JACK O' LANTERN.

Jack o' lanterns are the spirits of unrighteous men [1], which by a false glimmer seek to mislead the traveller, and to decoy him into bogs and moors. The best safeguard against them, when they appear, is to turn one's cap inside out. When any one sees a Jack o' lantern, let him take care not to point at him, for he will come if pointed at. It is also said that if any one calls him, he will come and light him who called; but then let him be very cautious.

Near Skovby on the isle of Falster [2] there are many Jack o' lanterns. The peasants say they are the souls of land-measurers who in their lifetime had perpetrated injustice in their measurements, and therefore run up Skovby bakke at midnight, which they measure with red hot iron rods, crying, "Here is the clear and right boundary! from here to there!"

[1] According to the Belgian tradition, they are the souls of unbaptized children.

[2] Lying near the south coast of Seeland.

THE BASILISK.

When a cock is seven years old it lays an egg, from which when hatched there comes forth a basilisk, an ugly monster that kills people only by looking at them. It is said that the only method by which this creature can be destroyed is by holding a looking-glass before it; for it is so ugly that it cannot survive the sight of itself.

THE JERUSALEM SHOEMAKER, OR WANDERING JEW, IN JUTLAND.

It is now very long since there was seen in Jutland a man mean and lowly in his garments, riding on a little white horse, with stirrups made of wood. When any one asked him whence he came and whither he was directing his course, he was wont to answer: "From Vendsyssel over Himmelsyssel southwards." He foretold, and said of a stone in Mae: "A thorn shall grow through the fissure in the stone, and in the thorn a magpie shall build her nest, hatch her young, and afterwards fly away with them." And this came to pass as he had said. He further foretold that when the magpie was flown, there should be a great battle in Vendsyssel, and the greater part of the people perish. Afterwards the women should acquire the courage and heart of men and slay the enemy. But when he was asked what further should happen, he answered: "Let the end follow."

In Aalborg he foretold something to the town-magistrate, which did not particularly please him, and for which he caused him to be scourged. He then foretold again, that like as his blood was running down his back, so should the magistrate's blood run over the streets of Aalborg. And it happened as he had said; for in a quarrel which arose in the town, the townsmen slew the magistrate in the street.

Of Haseriisaa, which at that time did not flow through Aalborg, he foretold that a time should come when it should run through the town; which also took place as he had predicted. Coming one day to Bolstrup, and having according to his custom taken up his quarters in a kiln, he rode the next day to the public assembly (Ting), where the judge of the district asked him: "How will it fare with me?" and got for answer: "Thou shalt die in a kiln." Nor did he fare better; for coming to poverty, he had at last no other place of shelter. Once when some boys scoffed at him, and one among them threw a cask-stave after him, he said, that a stave should be the boy's death; and the same boy, some time after, fell from a tree and struck a stave into his body. Of alms he accepted only so much as he required for the moment, and thus travelled from place to place.

The story of the shoemaker of Jerusalem is generally known. When Jesus passed by his house, bending under the weight of the cross, he would rest an instant at his door; but the miscreant came out, and with imprecations drove the Saviour away, for the sake of gaining the favour of his enemies. The shoemaker, whose name was Ahasuerus, then drew on himself the curse ever to be a wanderer and never to find rest until doomsday [1].

OF LAKES, BOTTOMLESS POOLS, ETC.

THIS LAKE.

At Kundby, in the district of Holbek [2], a Troll had his habitation in the high mount on which the church stands; but as the people in that neighbourhood were generally disposed to piety and went constantly to church, the Troll's greatest torment was the incessant ringing of bells in the church tower. At length he found himself compelled to take his departure; for nothing has contributed more to the migration of the Trolls than the increasing

[1] Afzelius, iii. 116.

[2] A small town in Seeland on the Issefiord.

piety of the people and the more frequent ringing of bells. He crossed over to Fyen, where he lived for some time. It happened once that a man who had recently fixed his habitation in Kundby, came to Fyen and met this Troll on the road. "Where hast thou thy home?" asked the Troll. There was nothing about the Troll unlike an ordinary person, therefore the man answered him truly: "I am from Kundby." "From Kundby?" repeated the Troll, "I don't know thee; though I think I know every man besides in Kundby. Wilt thou take a letter for me to Kundby?" The man expressed his willingness, and the Troll put the letter into the man's pocket, with the injunction not to take it thence until he came to Kundby church, where he would need merely to cast it over the wall of the churchyard, and the person would get it for whom it was intended. They then separated and the man thought no more of the letter; but when he had again crossed over to Seeland, and was sitting in the meadow where Tiis lake now is, the Troll's letter suddenly entered his thoughts. Taking it from his pocket, he sat a while with it in his hand, when on a sudden water began to bubble out from the seal, the letter expanded itself, and it was with difficulty that the man saved his life; for the Troll had enclosed a whole lake in the letter, intending by such a destruction to revenge himself on Kundby church. But God averted it, and the lake poured itself into the great hollow where it now is.

THE SUNKEN MANSION.

In the neighbourhood of Lindenborg, near Aarhuus, there is a lake which no one has hitherto been able to fathom. Of this lake the following story is current in the neighbourhood. Many years ago there stood in the place where the lake now is, a proud, ancient castle or mansion, of which the only trace remaining is a road that led to the gate,

but which is now lost under the waters of the lake. On one holyday-eve, when the family were from home, the servants of the place indulged in great revel and merriment, which at length proceeded so far, that in their state of drunkenness they wrapped a swine up in bed-linen, placed a cap on its head, and laid it in the master's bed. They then sent a message to the priest, summoning him to come without a moment's delay to administer to their master, who lay at the point of death. The priest was instantly there, and, observing no deception, read to the swine and did everything required by his vocation; but when he was about to administer the sacrament, all present burst into a fit of laughter, and the swine snapped the bread out of his hand. In terror he hurried from the place, but forgot to take his book with him. Just as he was hastening through the outer gate, the castle clock struck twelve, when a cracking and crashing began in every side and corner of the building. When he turned round the mansion had sunk and the lake rushed forth from the abyss. As he stood gazing, through fear and wonder unable to proceed, there came a little stool floating on the water to the border of the lake, on which lay the book that he had left in the mansion.

TRADITIONS OF WELLS.

HELEN'S WELL.

In Tisvilde Mark in Seeland, close on the coast, there is a spring, which beyond all others has acquired a celebrity on account of its miraculous virtues. On St. John's day, pilgrimages are made to it by the sick and crippled, even from the most southern parts of the island; and many have there recovered their health down to the present day. This spring is called Helen's Well, and various are the traditions current respecting it.

I.

There dwelt in Sweden a holy woman named Helen; she lived in a forest apart from human converse, and led a pure godly life. In her solitude she was assailed by some wicked men, who slew her and cast her body into the sea. There a large stone received her lifeless corpse and floated with it over to Seeland, where it was found under a high acclivity in Tibirke parish. But as, in consequence of the steepness, it was not practicable to bring it ashore, a miracle caused by her sanctity took place, the precipice burst asunder so that the body was borne through it into the plain. The cleft is still to be seen. At the spot where the body was first laid, a spring gushed forth, which is the celebrated well that still bears her name. When her body had been placed in a coffin, it was conveyed to Tisvilde church. When on its way, the bearers having used some indecent language, the bier became so heavy, that they could not move it from the spot, but it sank deep into the earth at the place which is still called Helen's grave. The stone on which she floated to Seeland yet lies on the strand, and bears evident traces of her body.

II.

Helen was a Scanian princess and much famed for her beauty. A king fell in love with her, and as he could not win her affection, he resolved on violence. In her distress Helen fled from place to place pursued by the king. When on reaching the sea-shore and the king was about to seize her, she plunged into the deep. But she did not perish. A large stone rose from the bottom of the ocean and received her, on which she floated over to Seeland. At the spot where she first set her foot on land there sprang forth a fountain which still bears her name, and

she lived long in that neighbourhood, and was venerated and visited as a holy woman.

III.

Three pious sisters being on a voyage together, all perished, and the waves dispersed their bodies in three several directions. The first of these was named Helen. Her body came to Tisvilde, where a fountain sprang from her grave. The name of the second was Karen. Her body came to land at the spot in Odd's district, where St. Karen's well is still shown. The third sister was in like manner cast on shore, and a well likewise sprang from her grave.

On a cliff in Odd's district there is a spring called Thore's well, which may possibly have been so named from the third sister.

ST. KNUD'S WELL.

Near Harrested in Seeland, on the spot where Duke Knud Lavard was treacherously murdered by the king's son Magnus (A.D. 1129), a spring gushed forth, which is visited by persons suffering from bodily ailments. It bears the name of St. Knud, and around it the grass is green both summer and winter.

SNOGSKILDE (SNAKE'S-WELL).

Whoever is so fortunate as to catch a snake with a crown on its head, or, as it is also called, a royal snake, and eats a piece of its flesh, becomes 'fremsynet' (i. e. able to see into hidden things), understands the speech of animals, and can read any book whatsoever.

From such an event Snogskilde in Fyen derives its name and origin. As a man was going down the hills in Guldbierg parish he saw a royal snake putting its head forth from the earth, which he quickly seized and ran off

with it, followed by a multitude of snakes, all bent on rescuing their king; but the man, casting off his wooden shoes, reached his little hut in safety, instantly ate a part of the snake, and thus acquired a vast insight into the secrets of this world. From the hole, through which the crowned snake had crept forth, there sprang a fountain, which for many years after was fenced in and visited, on account of the wonderful virtue of its water in the cure of all diseases. It has now fallen into neglect [1].

On the isle of Mors [2] there are said to be white vipers, though they are found but seldom. Whoever eats one acquires an extraordinary degree of understanding, together with the faculty of seeing things invisible to others.

THE SAND-HILLS AT NESTVED.

At Fladsö there dwelt a Troll who bore a grudge against the inhabitants of Nestved [3]. He therefore one day took his leather bag, went to the beach, and filled it with sand. It was now his intention to do the people of Nestved a great injury, by burying their houses under the sand; but as he was on his way to the town, with the sack on his shoulders, the sand ran out through a hole, and caused the row of sand-hills that lie between Fladsö and Nestved; nor until he reached the spot where the castle of Husvold formerly stood, was he aware that he had lost the greater part of the sand, at which he was so angry that he cast the remainder against Nestved, where it is still to be seen, a solitary sand-hill.

OF TREES.

In Rugaard Forest there is a tree which has no leaves, of which it is related, that although it has the appearance of other trees, it is, nevertheless, an elf, who by night

[1] See pp. 98, 99.

[2] A small island in the Liimfiord, in the north of Jutland.

[3] A town in the south of Seeland.

goes about the forest. To injure this tree would be dangerous, and would surely call forth vengeance.

THE LONELY THORN.

One often sees in a field a solitary thorn, which never grows larger. Such are always bewitched, and care should be taken not to approach them too near in the night time, as there comes a fiery wheel forth from the bush, which, if a person cannot run away from it, will destroy him.

OF THE PESTILENCE IN JUTLAND.

On the east side of the churchyard of Fuur no one is buried, because when the Black Death raged in the country, a living child was buried there, in order to stay the contagion.

Other instances are given of this method of staying the pestilence.

THE RAT-HUNTER.

On the Alhede the people were grievously annoyed with rats, mice and other vermin, when there came an itinerant rat-hunter who undertook to drive them all away. He first, however, inquired whether they had ever seen a dragon thereabouts, and on their answering in the negative, caused a pile to be raised on the middle of the heath, having kindled which he sat by it on a chair. While the fire was burning he took forth a book, out of which he read much, and while he read, rats and mice, serpents and various reptiles were seen to go into the fire. But at last there came a dragon, at the sight of which the man complained that he was betrayed and must now perish himself. The serpent then wound his tail round both the man and his chair, and thus entered the fire, where they both perished together.

HISTORICAL.

HABOR AND SIGNELIL.

Near Ringsted[1] lies Sigersted, so called from King Sigar, who resided there. His daughter, Signelil, loved a noble warrior named Habor, and to this day is shown, near Alsted, the place where they usually met. It still bears the name of Signelil's walk.

One day, when chasing a hart, and pursuing it across the rivulet of Vrangstrup, her horse fell under her, so that she was exposed to much danger. At this instant Habor appeared, sprang into the stream and rescued her. Their love at length became so ardent, that Habor, disguised as a waiting-maid, secretly gained admission to Signelil, which Gunvare, Signelil's nurse, treacherously betrayed to King Sigar. The whole affair being now divulged, and Habor being seized by the king's men, the two lovers formed the resolution of dying together. Habor was conducted to Stanghöi, there to be hanged; but feeling desirous in his last moments of proving the fidelity of Signelil, he requested that, before he was hanged, his cloak might be suspended on the gibbet, that he might thence form an idea how he himself should hang. Signelil, in the mean while, cast all her jewels into a deep pit, which is still called Signelil's well; whence the saying derives its origin, that Sigersted has more gold and silver than it knows of. She then shut herself in her bower, anxiously watching the gibbet on which Habor was to suffer. On perceiving the cloak, she set fire to the bower, in the belief that Habor was already dead. When the bower together with Signelil was consumed, and Habor was con-

[1] Once a considerable, but now a small, town in Seeland. In its church (St. Bent's), formerly belonging to the Benedictine convent, are deposited the remains of several of the early kings and royal personages.

vinced of her love, he resigned himself to his fate, and was buried in Hagehöi. But the accursed nurse had no great joy of her treachery, being afterwards cast into a well, which still bears the name of the Nurse's Well.

This is one of the most ancient and celebrated of all the Scandinavian traditions. In Saxo the narrative at length is admirably given. See also W. Grimm, Altdänische Heldenlieder, p. 509, also Udvalgte Danske Viser. iii. pp. 403, *sqq.*, where the several places in Denmark, Sweden and Norway are specified which claim to be the scene of the tragedy.

FEGGEKLIT.

There was once, in days of yore, a king in Mors named Fegge or Fengo. His castle was on the hill which after him is still called Feggeklit, from whence he could order his ships out to sea. He and his brother, Horvendil, ruled alternately on land and on sea, so that one, during three years, should be engaged in piratical expeditions abroad, while the other directed the government at home. But Fegge, growing jealous of Horvendil's good fortune and increasing power, slew him and married his widow, which murder was afterwards avenged by Horvendil's son, Amlet, who slew Fegge, whose grave is still to be seen on Feggeklit.

JELLINGE BARROWS.

About two miles to the north-west of Veile, near the village of Jellinge, lie King Gorm the Old and his queen, Thyra, each in a barrow by the side of the churchyard. On Thyra's barrow, it is said, there was formerly a fair fountain, which, as some relate, was conducted in copper pipes under the earth, from a hill near the village of Rugballe; while others say that it was derived from a spring that rises in Finnet field; others assure us that Thyra was suspected of infidelity towards her husband, but that three days after her interment, a fountain sprang from the earth in token of her innocence. A peasant once

washed his horse in the water to cure it of the scab, in consequence of which profanation the well was dried up.

Near these barrows, just without the door of the church, stand two remarkable monuments of antiquity, namely, two very large stones with runic inscriptions, which tell of King Gorm and his queen Thyra. This writing can, however, be no longer read by any one, unless he stands on his head and has been to the Black School. A cunning priest once read the writing, and thereby learned the existence of treasure lying sunk in a field on a large stone; but where it is now to be found, nobody knows.

HOLGER THE DANE UNDER KRONBORG [1].

Under the castle of Kronborg a clashing of arms was frequently to be heard, for which no one could assign a cause, and in the whole country not one could be found daring enough to descend into its nethermost passages. To a slave, who had forfeited his life, his pardon and freedom were promised, if, by descending as far as the passage admitted, he could bring information of what he there met with. He came at length to a large iron door, which, on his knocking, opened of itself, and he found himself in a deep vault. From the middle of the roof hung a lamp nearly burnt out, and beneath it was an immense stone table, around which sat steel-clad warriors bending down, and resting their heads on their crossed arms. He who sat at the end of the table then arose; it was Holger the Dane; but in lifting his head from his arm, the stone table burst asunder, for his beard had grown into it. "Reach me thy hand!" said he to the slave; but the latter, not venturing to give his hand, held out an iron bar instead, which Holger so squeezed that the marks remained visible. At length letting it go, he exclaimed: "It gladdens me that there are still men in Denmark!"

[1] The castle at Elsinore, which guards the passage of the Sound.

BISHOP WILLIAM'S FOOT-MARK.

At the door on the south side of Roeskilde [1] cathedral, there is still to be seen on the threshold the place where Bishop William in his anger set his foot, when he prevented King Svend Estrithsen from entering the church, and excommunicated him, for having profaned the holy edifice with unjust bloodshed.

BISHOP WILLIAM'S DEATH AND BURIAL.

When the tidings reached Bishop William of Roeskilde that his king and master, Svend, surnamed Estrithsen, was dead, at an advanced age, in Jutland, he prepared to go and meet the king's body. Before he set out he went into the church of the Holy Trinity, called the grave-diggers to him, ordered them first to dig a grave for the king and then one for himself; as he felt certain that he should immediately follow his beloved master. He then entered a carriage and proceeded to meet the royal corpse. On reaching Topshöge forest he observed two remarkably high trees, which he ordered his attendants to fell and to form a coffin of them. Supposing that the bishop intended the coffin for the king's body, they executed his order and placed the coffin on a vehicle to be conveyed after them. But on emerging from the forest, Bishop William seeing the king's body drawing nigh, ordered the driver to stop; he then descended from the carriage, spread his cloak on the ground, fell on his knees, and prayed to God for peace and a happy departure. When the attendants, who were standing by, had long wondered that the bishop still continued prostrate, they raised his head and saw that he was no more. They then laid his body in the coffin and conveyed it back to Roeskilde. Thus was his corpse borne

[1] Formerly the capital of Denmark and the residence of the Danish monarchs, whose burial-place is in its venerable cathedral.

after the king's, and buried in the quire, in the place that he had himself selected.

Afterwards, when Bishop Svend Norbagge[1] was rebuilding the church of hewn stone, and all was completed as far as the quire, it being found that Bishop William's burial-place occupied too much room, he ordered it to be removed. In the night there came a man clad in priestly attire to the precentor, who lay asleep, and ordered him to greet Bishop Svend and say to him, that he ought to have been satisfied with the honour of completing the reconstruction of the church, and not to have separated his body from the king's; adding, that if Bishop Svend had led a less godly life, he would have taken revenge on himself, but now he would be revenged on the building only that he had raised. With these words he thrust at the wall with his staff so that a whole column came falling down in fragments. The precentor, on awaking from his dream, saw that the column was thrown down, and found himself lying amid the rubbish, but without having suffered any injury. When informed of this occurrence, Bishop Svend answered, that it was not to be wondered at that Bishop William was so hasty and unyielding after his death, seeing that he had been so during his whole life.

For a long time the grave remained untouched, until the death of Bishop Asker, when it was thought that the most honourable place for him was by the side of Bishop

[1] Of this prelate, a Norwegian by birth, Saxo (pp. 559, *sq.*) relates a story worth repeating:—When raised to the episcopal dignity, Svend, though well versed in his own native literature, was miserably deficient in Latin. The preference shown him by the king excited the envy of many, and by way of rendering him ridiculous, it was contrived, when he had to celebrate mass, to lay before him a book in which the first two letters of *famulum*, in the prayer for the king, were erased; so that in his ignorance he prayed God to protect his majesty, *mulum suum*. On inspecting the book, the king at once perceived the trick, and caused the bishop (whom he loved for his virtues) to apply himself to the study of the liberal arts, in which he afterwards excelled.

William, of which opinion were the precentor Herman, the schoolmaster Arnfast, and the provost Isaac. These three opened the grave, and found, on examining it, Bishop William's cope, which spread around so sweet and pleasant an odour, that they thence concluded he must be blessed in heaven. The odour was at the same time so powerful, that for three days those who had touched the cope could not wash it off their fingers. But when they threw his bones aside with no respect, each received his punishment. Herman the precentor got the St. Anthony's fire in his nose, of which within three days he died. The schoolmaster, who, by way of remedy for an increasing debility of the limbs, took to drinking, became such a sufferer that he vomited up his liver, and confessed to Bishop Absalon, who visited him, that he suffered all because of that sin: he entered a cloister and died three months after. Provost Isaac, who saw how the other two were punished, sold all that he owned and founded the convent of St. Mary in Roeskilde, but nevertheless died of a wasting sickness.

THE PUNISHMENT OF INHUMANITY.

When King Cnut the Saint was pursued to the church of St. Alban in Odense, he knelt down before the high altar, prayed to God for forgiveness of his sins, and prepared himself for death. While there kneeling he suffered severely from thirst, and therefore besought a Jutlander, who peered in at a window, to be so compassionate as to give him a little drink of water. The man thereupon ran to a brook and brought some water in a jug; but when in the act of reaching it in to the king, another Jutlander, who was standing by, struck the vessel with his spear, so that all the water was spilt on the church floor. Then said the king to him who had broken the jug: "Dost thou deny me a little drink of water?" And having said this,

he was slain by a stone that was cast at him (A.D. 1086). But the pitiless Jute met with his reward. He became mad and suffered from burning thirst, and one day having laid himself down by a spring to draw up water, he slipt half way down into the well and remained hanging by the legs, with his head close to the water, though without touching it, and so perished.

SVEND GRATHE'S MILITARY CHEST.

In Jutland, near the village of Kragelund, there is a large morass called Graa-Mose. It was formerly called Grathe Mose, it having been there that Svend Grathe was slain by King Valdemar (A.D. 1157). Connected with this place is the following tradition. When Svend Grathe saw that the battle was lost, he caused his large military chest to be cast into the slough (for such at that time it was), from which cause there is seen, as in every place where treasure is concealed, lights burning by night. Hitherto it has been sought for in vain; and a schoolteacher, who had one night stuck pegs where he saw the lights, found them all pulled up on the following morning.

THE TWO CHURCH TOWERS.

Herr Asser Ryg resolved on building a church at Fienneslövlille; but before the same was finished, he was obliged to go to the wars with his kinsmen. When on the eve of departure, he desired his wife, who was at the time pregnant, that if she brought him a son, to place a tower on the church, but if a daughter, then to omit that ornament. When he returned some time after, lo, there stood the church with two towers! His wife had brought him two sons, and these were Absalon and Esbern Snare.

The words of Saxo (see Dahlmann, Gesch. v. Dännem. i. 279, *note*) render this tradition rather doubtful: "quamquam (Hesbernus) natu præstet." Absalon was the celebrated archbishop of Lund and still more

celebrated statesman and warrior under Valdemar I., surnamed the Great. His brother, Esbern (Asbiörn), was also a distinguished statesman and warrior.

ARCHBISHOP ABSALON'S DEATH.

Absalon had wronged a peasant, who, when on his death-bed, cited the archbishop before the judgement-seat of God; and at the moment when the peasant died, Absalon was also called to his account. It befell at the same time in the monastery of Sorö, that the brethren, who had received no tidings of the archbishop's death, heard, on the evening of the same day, a mournful voice near the altar, saying: "Sora! Sora! pro me supplex ora!"

DANNEBROG.

While King Valdemar the Victorious was fighting against the heathen Livonians, with the view of converting them to the Christian faith, Archbishop Andrew of Lund stood, like the Moses of his time, on a high hill, offering up prayers to God for the success of the Danish arms. And it is said, that as long as he was able to hold his arms aloft, the Danes were successful; but the instant he let them sink, through the weakness of age, the heathens gained the advantage. On which account, the other priests, who were present, supported his arms as long as the conflict lasted. It was in this battle the miracle took place, that, when the Danish principal banner was lost in the heat of the contest, there fell from heaven a banner bearing a white cross on a red field, and to this the Danes owed the victory. This precious banner was preserved for a long time after, and it was the general belief, that wherever it was, there was victory certain. They named it the Dannebrog. On the spot where this battle was fought, the town of Wolmar was afterwards built, and so named after King Valdemar.

DANNEBROG SHIPS.

On Gienner Mark, about a mile from Apenrade[1], there are still the remains of an ancient monument called the Dannebrog ships. It is said to have originally consisted of twenty greater or smaller stones, shaped into the figure of ships, and set up on a level spot in the form of an oval, so that the end of one stone is parted from the next only by another stone standing up between them.

Of these stones it is related, that when King Valdemar II. had conquered the heathen Livonians, through the aid of the miracle of the Dannebrog, he, on his way back to Denmark, caused these stones to be set up near the bay formed by the Baltic on the east of the rural village of Gienner, as a lasting monument of his victory, on which account they were called the Dannebrog ships.

In the course of time some of these stones have been broken and placed in the fences of the peasants; there is, nevertheless, still a remnant of them left standing, and ancient people, who have seen more of them, declare that they had the form of ships.

ST. NIELS (NICHOLAS), THE PATRON OF AARHUUS.

When King Cnut the Sixth was on his way from North- to South-Jutland, and was in Hadersley[2], where he intended to pass the night, there came a soothsayer to him, who had knowledge of the stars. This man declared he had read in the heavens that on the next night a child would be conceived, who in the course of time should acquire great renown and be in favour both with God and man. On hearing this, the king was instantly seized with

[1] A town on the east coast of Sleswig.

[2] Or, Ger. Hadersleben, a town of Sleswig. South Jutland is another name for the duchy of Sleswig, which it bore till the close of the 14th century.

a strong desire to be the father of so fortunate a babe, and forthwith gave orders that a noble young lady should be secretly conducted to him on the following night and share his bed. This took place as he had commanded, and the said young lady, at the expiration of nine months, brought a boy into the world, who cost his mother her life. This prince, who at his baptism received the name of Niels, was delivered to the king's sister, to be reared by her until he was sufficiently grown up to be conducted to the court, there to be instructed in martial exercises and knightly demeanour. When Prince Niels had been some time at court, it came to his knowledge that his existence had cost his mother her life, which circumstance had such an effect on his mind, that from that moment he entirely altered his course of life; so that it was said of him, that from that time he never laughed. The dissipations of the court were so distasteful to him, that he sought solitude, and devoted himself to praying and fasting to that degree, that every Friday he partook only of bread and water, renounced the use of linen, clothed himself in a garment of hair, and passed the nights in devout prayer on his bare knees. At last he resolved wholly to forsake the turmoil of the world, and withdrew to Aarhuus, there to pass the remainder of his life. In that city he founded a monastery with a church, which was afterwards called by his name. To this cloister he retired, and chose a monk named Hugo to live with him, besides whom he associated with no one.

A short time before his death, which happened in the year 1180, a revelation took place. The before-mentioned Hugo, who slept in the same apartment with the prince, saw in the night a procession of young clergymen enter the chamber, clad in their robes of ceremony, with purple copes, and bearing lighted wax tapers in their hands. At the brilliancy of the light Hugo awoke, rose from his bed,

fell on his knees before his young master, and related to him the vision he had seen, asking what it betokened? The prince answered that it was a message from heaven, to announce that he should die on the night following. The next day he summoned to him his friends in the city and all the monks of the convent, gave them kind exhortations, and bade them farewell. He then distributed liberal alms among the poor, and departed hence, as he had predicted, on the following night, after having directed to be buried in the church of St. Oluf by the sea, which church he had, during his life, enriched with royal donations. After his death, it seemed to Bishop Svend of Aarhuus that the spot chosen by the prince was too mean for so exalted a personage; he would, therefore, have had his body borne to the conventual church of St. Nicholas; but it happened that a star was seen to fall from heaven on the eastern side of St. Oluf's church, which was interpreted to signify that the prince by that miracle repeated his wish and command; so that the bishop was forced to comply. After his burial in that church, divers miracles took place there from time to time. By the grave a wooden cross was erected, which in the course of time having become decayed, these words were heard thrice repeated: "Make a new cross of oak from Skeibye forest, and set it on the mound where St. Niels is buried!" This was done as ordered, and the trunk that was brought from the forest was so large and heavy, that five yoke of oxen could hardly draw it into Aarhuus.

Near to the grave there stood a large apple-tree. A person having once climbed up this tree for the purpose of stealing the fruit, became palsied both head and foot, so that he could neither descend nor even move, before he had prayed to the saint for forgiveness, and made a vow that he would never again be tempted to rob him of his apples.

There was a box placed by the grave, which day and night stood open to receive the pious gifts of every one who had, through the intercession of the saint, recovered from blindness, deafness, or other corporal infirmity. From this box a thief was once tempted to carry off a pair of curiously wrought eyes of silver, which a man, who had been restored to sight at St. Niels' grave, had placed in it. This thief came from Horsens, and desiring to hasten back with his booty, ran the whole night on the way, as he thought, to that town; but at day-break met a priest just entering a churchyard, from whom he learned that he was still in St. Oluf's churchyard, and that, notwithstanding all his running, he had not stirred from the spot. He then confessed his enormous sin, and having given back the silver eyes, without difficulty found the way back to Horsens.

A cow belonging to a poor woman having died, St. Niels restored it to life. He did in like manner with a flock of sheep in Randlev; and a hawk, which had died on King Valdemar's hand, became again living on calling on St. Niels.

He was once standing near some workmen, who were cutting timber in Viby forest for a church that was to be built. Hearing them complain of thirst, he forthwith caused a spring to gush out for their refreshment, which still bears his name, and is visited by the sick.

After St. Niels had performed many such miracles, and his shrine been richly gifted, there arose in the time of King Eric Menved an apprehension, that the sweet and powerful odour, which issued from his grave, would tempt Marsk Stig and his band of robbers over from the isle of Hielm, not far from Aarhuus. In consequence of this apprehension, both St. Niels and his shrine were removed to St. Clement's church in Aarhuus; but from that time he performed no more miracles, and the pleasant odour

from his bones entirely ceased and returned not again—not even after he had been made a saint by the pope.

LITTLE KIRSTEN'S (CHRISTINE'S) GRAVE.

Just without the north door of Vestervig[1] church there is a remarkably long grave-stone, with a cross engraved on it, and an illegible inscription. Beneath it lies Little Kirsten, the sister of King Valdemar the First. During the absence of the king she entered into an illicit connection with Buris, prince of the Wends, and brother to the queen, by whom she became pregnant. When the king on his return observed what had taken place, he called, as it is said, Little Kirsten out to dance, and danced her to death. Prince Buris he ordered to be blinded and cast into prison. After a time, when the king's anger was somewhat mitigated, he allowed the unhappy prince to choose another prison, and he chose the monastery of Vestervig, where he was kept confined until his death in a tower, which stood where the churchyard now is; and it is related that he had a chain round his body so long that he could go from his tower to Kirsten's grave, which he daily visited. The queen, his sister, on the other hand, who had always hated Little Kirsten, came one day riding that way, and to show her contempt, galloped over the grave; but the stone proved less hard than her heart, and received the dints of the horse's hoofs.

MARSK STIG.

After the death of Marsk Stig at Hielm[2], his corpse was conveyed by night to the church of Hintzcholm, and

[1] A town on the Liimfiord, on the west side of Jutland.

[2] Stig Andersen was Marsk (i. e. Marshal) of the kingdom. He was one of the assassins of King Erik Glipping, who, it is said, had dishonoured his wife. Under the reign of Erik Menved, son of the murdered king, the Marsk being outlawed, fortified himself on Hielm, a little island off the coast of Jutland in the Cattegat. See Danske Viser, ii. 115–162.

there secretly buried by his followers, who would not have it known where he rested, lest his remains should suffer insult. But at the time they brought the body to the church, it happened that a servant girl saw a light in the building and men carrying in a corpse. This she told to the priest, and the grave was afterwards searched. But the priest not knowing who it was that had been so buried, made no mention of the circumstance, but took the velvet that was over the coffin, a part of which he gave to the girl. A considerable time after this event, the same girl became the wife of one of Marsk Stig's followers, who one day noticing the velvet on a cushion, inquired of her whence she got it? She thereupon recounted what had taken place; but as he was fearful that his master's resting-place might thereby be one day discovered, he killed her, although he entertained much affection for her.

KING VALDEMAR AND QUEEN HELVIG.

I.

Once when king Valdemar was in the act of mounting his horse, and had already set one foot in the stirrup, he fell into deep thought, and so continued standing, to the great astonishment of those present. At length one of his attendants ventured to ask him why he thus continued standing? The king answered, that if he could not inform him, nor procure him information whether that over which he was pondering would happen or not, he must never again appear before him. With this answer the man went away full of sorrow; he wandered about in the forest, and knew not to which side he should turn. At length he observed a woman in the forest sitting by a fire, who on his approach asked him why he appeared so sorrowful, and on his informing her, laughed at him, saying: "Greet thy master and tell him, that Sweden can easily fall to

Denmark, if he will receive Queen Helvig into favour!" Queen Helvig was in disgrace, and had been repudiated by the king; for which reason, on hearing the man's answer, he was very angry, and said that such should never be the case.

It happened, however, as through a miracle, that as the king was once hunting in the forest near the castle of Söborg, where Queen Helvig was at the time residing, he saw a damsel, with whose beauty he was so smitten that he ordered his attendants to conduct her to him at midnight. But when the servants came to employ force against this young person, announcing to her at the same time the king's will, Queen Helvig, who had received information of the whole affair, resolved on putting on the young girl's clothes, and letting herself be conducted by the attendants to the king her consort. She became pregnant, and gave birth to a daughter, afterwards the celebrated Queen Margaret, who united Sweden with Denmark and Norway.

This and the three following traditions refer to King Valdemar IV. surnamed Atterdag (from atter, *again*, and dag, *day*), in consequence, it is supposed, of his frequent use of the expression "Morgen er atter en Dag" (To-morrow is again a day). His queen, Helvig, was confined in the castle of Söborg until her death, on account of the affair with Folker Lovmandsen. See p. 236.

II.

Once when king Volmar was about to mount on horseback, he continued standing with his left foot in the stirrup, and appeared lost in thought. At this moment a man was led by whom the king had condemned to death, who falling on his knees, prayed for his life. The king starting said: "If thou canst enable me to know what the thought was that has just passed from my mind, and whether it will be accomplished, thou shalt be free."

Hereupon the man got permission to travel over the country to all those skilled in secret knowledge; but no one could answer his inquiry. One evening he came to Borbierg, a steep cliff lying out in the sea. Here he struck thrice with the white staff he had in his hand, and the dwarf of the cliff came out. He could, however, afford no information: "but I have," said he, "a great-grandfather in Dagbierg Daas, who is an old and very sagacious man: try your luck with him." The man took staff in hand and hied away to Dagbierg, but fared not a whit better there; the dwarf knew nothing whatever: "But I have a great-great-grandfather in the Rödsteen (Red-stone) on Fuur; if he can't inform you, no one can." The man then dragged on to the isle of Fuur, and it happened to be just midnight when he stood by the cave and knocked three times. A very little old man came tottering forth. "Yes, I can help thee, sure enough; but first thou shalt tell me three truths." The man bethought himself a moment, and said: "Much have I travelled and far have I been [1], yet never have seen so firm a house as thine."—"Yes, that I can well believe, for it is a cave of one stone;—now again!"—"Much have I travelled and far have I been, yet never have seen so much gold and silver in one spot."—"Yes, that is very possible; but now another."—"Much have I travelled and far have I been, yet never have seen so little a man with so long a beard." For it was so long that the little man almost trod on it. "Yes," said the mannikin, "and now I will tell thee what the king was thinking about, and that is, whether he could get Denmark, Norway and Sweden hammered together; but that will only take place under his daughter." The man was heartily rejoiced, appeared with his answer before the king, and got remission of his sentence according to promise.

[1] Almost the words of Odin in the Eddaic poem, Vafthrudnir's Mál.

QUEEN HELVIG AND FALK LOHMAN.

When King Valdemar Atterdag discovered that Queen Helvig was unfaithful to him, and held illicit intercourse with Falk Lohman, he caused the latter to be hanged without the Strand-gate at Nyborg [1], and adjudged the queen to witness the execution from the ramparts. The prison in which he was confined was in the castle, and till within a few years was shown, under the name of Falk Lohman's chamber. But the queen yet appears mourning on the ramparts, and, it is said, sometimes speaks to the sentinels, one of whom so won her favour, that she promised him he should, every morning, in a certain place and under a particular stone find a dollar. For some time the soldier regularly found his dollar, but having fallen sick and sending one of his comrades to fetch it, there was no dollar there, nor has one been found under the stone from that time.

QUEEN MARGARET WHEN A CHILD.

Queen Helvig had forfeited the favour of the king her husband, and for several years been confined in Gurre castle, because she had caused Tovelille, the king's mistress, to be killed in a bath. It happened that the king, when once riding over the 'Copper-bridge,' noticed a pretty little girl, in a peasant's dress, standing at the castle gate. Being much pleased with the child, he placed her before him on his horse. "Now," said the little one, "we will ride to court." "What wilt thou do there?" asked the king. "Beg forgiveness for my mother, Queen Helvig," answered the child. This so softened the king's anger, that he took his queen again into favour. The

[1] A fortified town on the island of Fyen, whence is the regular passage over to Seeland.

little girl was named Margaret; she grew up and became queen of the three northern realms.

PROPHECY OF KING FREDERIC THE FIRST'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

In the year 1513, when King Christian II. was celebrating his marriage in the palace at Copenhagen, and the assembled nobles were sitting amid joy and festivity, Duke Frederic, the king's paternal uncle, entered the hall. Among the nobles present was Ditlef Rewentlow, who was reported to be well skilled in astronomy and the black art. When he saw the duke entering, he hastily rose, saying to those around him: "Stand up, ye Danish nobles! and advance to meet your future king!" Which prophecy, after a lapse of eight years, was fulfilled, and Ditlef Rewentlow, on the accession of Frederic I., became his chancellor and privy counsellor.

SPECTACLES DUCATS.

In the reign of King Christian IV. a gold mine was discovered in Norway, from which the king caused some half-ducats to be coined. But some foreign traders having denied that it was Norwegian gold, it being quite unheard of to find gold in Norway, the king was indignant; and therefore, when more gold was afterwards found there, he ordered half- and quarter-ducats to be coined, bearing for device a pair of spectacles, thereby signifying that those who were still doubtful, might put on their spectacles to see the better.

OF HISTORICAL PERSONS, FAMILY TRADITIONS, ETC.

THE ARMS OF THE BILLE FAMILY.

In the arms of the noble family of Bille there is a dwarf or little wild man, concerning whom there is the following tradition.

Many hundred years ago there was a great drought in the country, so that all the water-mills were stopt, and the people could get no corn ground. During this calamity a land-proprietor of the above-mentioned family was walking in his court-yard, much perplexed and dejected, when a little dwarf came to him, whose body was all shaggy, and in his hand carrying a tree that had been torn up by the roots. Standing before the proprietor, he asked him why he was so sad? To which the other answered, "What can it avail if I tell thee, for thou canst not help me." The dwarf replied, "Thou art sad because thou canst not get thy corn ground, and hast many children and people that require bread. But I will show thee a place on thy own grounds where thou canst build seven mills that shall never lack water." And having pointed out to him the spot, Herr Bille built there the seven mills still existing by Ellebro Dam, which are never at a stand for want of water, winter or summer.

It is further related that the same dwarf gave him a little white horn, which, as long as it remained in his family, should preserve them in prosperity. This horn, it is said, was long preserved at Söholm in Seeland.

HERR ESKE BROK.

Herr Eske Brok, who dwelt at Vemmeltoft, going one day into the fields, amused himself with striking the air with his stick, when suddenly a hat fell at his feet, which he

ordered his servant to take up, and placed it on his own head; but had no sooner done so than he became invisible. He then tried it on his servant with the same result; so that whoever had the hat on became invisible to others. Greatly delighted with his prize, he took it home with him. Shortly after a bareheaded boy came to the gate, requesting to speak with Herr Eske Brok. When the latter appeared, the boy requested to have his hat back, which Herr Eske had struck from his head with a stick, offering a hundred ducats for it, and afterwards more, if he would let him have it. But all that the boy could say was to no purpose, for Herr Eske had taken a particular fancy to the hat. At length the boy promised him, that if he would give it back, his posterity should never come to want anything, and by this means got the hat from the 'junker,' who thought that with such a promise it was well paid. But the boy, when going out at the door, said: "Thou shalt leave no sons behind thee, but daughters only!" And so it proved in the sequel, for Herr Eske's wife brought forth several sons all dead-born, and he himself died the last of his race.

THE HALF-FULL BOTTLE.

When the Swedes above a hundred years since invaded Holstein, it happened that after a battle in which the Danes were victorious, a soldier, who had his post on the field, had with great difficulty obtained a bottle of beer to allay his burning thirst. When about to drink he heard a Swede, who had lost both his legs, calling to him in a faint voice, and begging a refreshing draught. The soldier thereupon went to him, and seeing his deplorable condition, bent forwards to reach him the bottle; but at the same moment the treacherous enemy fired his pistol at him, hoping even in death to have his revenge. But the ball missed, for our Lord held his hand over the compassionate

soldier. Rising up he drank half the contents of the bottle, and then held it out to the traitor saying: "Scoundrel! now thou shalt have only the half."

When this reached the ears of the king, he ordered the soldier to be called before him, and gave him a coat of arms, in which was a half-filled bottle; and this bearing has continued in his family, which yet lives in Flensborg.

HERR ERLAND LIMBEK.

The Limbeks were an eminent race in Denmark, but are now extinct; from, it is said, the following cause.

While Herr Erland Limbek was residing at Gravengaard in Jutland, there one day came a dwarf to him as he was walking in his fields, complaining that he was engaged in hostilities with another dwarf, and feared that he was hardly strong enough to withstand him, unless Herr Erland would come to his aid on a certain day. He at the same time promised the knight that if he would do so, his race should be powerful and prosperous as long as the world lasted. Herr Erland promised to assist the dwarf, and fixed both time and place; but being one night unable to sleep, and tossing himself about in the bed, his wife asked him why he was so restless? He then imparted to her the promise he had made to the dwarf, whereupon she exclaimed: "God forbid, my dear husband! that you should have intercourse with such demons!" and persuaded him to break his word. Some time after, on a Christmas eve, as Herr Erland was sitting merry with his family and friends, the door of the room was opened, and a little dwarf in a habit of gold embroidery entered, saying to the knight: "Had you kept your word, I would have kept mine; but now your race shall from day to day degenerate and be despised, and at last be extinguished, and the last of your family shall be mad!" Hereupon Herr Erland became angry, and said: "Dost thou threaten

me?" and attempted to strike him, but the dwarf retired to the door. The knight then ordered a servant to seize him, but the dwarf slipt away in haste, yet was, nevertheless, jammed in the doorway, so that he lost one of his shoes, which proved to be of pure gold. From this event the knight acquired the name of Herr Erland Guldsko.

THE FAMILY OF MONRAD.

The family of Monrad is said to descend from a miller in Hungary, who in a war with the Turks raised a body of men and destroyed a large Turkish force, whereby he relieved a corps of Imperialists. As a reward for so important a service, the emperor made him a general and raised him to the rank of noble, giving him shield and helmet, and commanding him to bear in his shield a half-moon, in remembrance of the Turks, and a mill-wheel, that he might remember his former condition; whence he and his posterity acquired the name of Mondrad[1].

THE NAME AND ARMS OF THE ROSENKRANDSES.

I.

The first of the Rosenkrands family was Herr Eric. In company with Stie Hvide he made a journey to Rome, where the pope gave him a wreath (krands) of roses, which, as a remembrance, he caused to be represented on his helmet, whence his family acquired its name. This Herr Rosenkrands lies buried in Hiörringholms Mark.

II.

In the year 663 the young Herr Styge, a son of the king of Denmark, made a journey to King Ekuin in England, for the purpose of helping him in war. There, on account of his valour, he became a great favourite, parti-

[1] From Ger. Mond, *moon*, and Rad, *wheel*.

cularly of the ladies; but the one that loved him most was the daughter of Reduval, the prince royal, and he, on his part, also loved her. He therefore continued at court throughout the winter; but when summer came the princess was pregnant. After his departure from England, the princess was delivered of a son, which she laid in a golden coffer, with a consecrated candle and salt, because he had not been baptized, and placed the coffer out on the sea-strand. One day her father, the prince royal, Reduval, happening to ride by, found the infant, and concluding from the golden coffer that he was of high parentage, he had him reared and gave him the name of Carl. After the king's death, the prince royal, Reduval, ascended the throne of England, of which he was the first Christian king. Carl in the meanwhile grew up and became distinguished for bravery, so that the king thought he could not do better than marry him to his daughter. When the wedding was just about to take place, the princess disclosed to the bridegroom that he was her own son by Prince Styge of Denmark. At this intelligence the king was so exasperated, that he declared at first she should perish on the pile; but the young Carl interceded for her and effected a marriage with her and Prince Styge, who had been separated from her for nineteen years.

In remembrance of these events Prince Carl divided his shield into four parts by a white cross, whereby he betokened that he was a Christian; he next painted it transversely red and blue, thereby betokening that he was both a Danish and an English prince. In the first quarter he placed a white lion crowned, to denote Denmark; in the fourth another white lion for England. In the second and third quarters he placed a black and white chess-board, thereby signifying the separation that had so long existed between his father and mother. And these are the arms of Rosenkrands.

THE ARMS OF THE TROLLE FAMILY.

The Trolles were in their time, particularly in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, one of the first families in Denmark. In allusion to their name, they bore in their coat a Troll or demon, and wherever monuments of the family are to be seen, this demon is to be seen also. Even in the cathedral of Roeskilde, he is represented on the iron lattice which encloses the sepulchral chapel of the family. He there appears larger than life with a long tail and claws in a half-flying attitude, the effect of which, when viewed on a sudden, is somewhat startling. The Trolle family is now extinct. One of its most illustrious members was Admiral Herluf Trolle, the founder of the school of Herlufsholm in the seventeenth century, the Eton or Winchester of Denmark [1].

MAJOR-GENERAL SVANWEDEL.

About two hundred years ago there dwelt at Nörre-Vosborg in Jutland a proprietor named Svanwedel. He had been a major-general in the Swedish war, and was, moreover, skilled in the black art. On one occasion, during the war in Scania, he was surrounded by the enemy, and had with him only a small body of troops. But he managed to help himself; for in the night he transformed a quantity of rushes, that were growing in the field, into soldiers, with whose aid he attacked and beat the enemy. Next morning these soldiers were all rushes again standing on the field as before.

When he died at Vosborg, his body was, according to usage, deposited in the castle chapel before being conveyed to the church. One evening, as his daughter entered the chapel, he rose up in his coffin and directed her to send for Magister Niels, the priest of Huusby. Although this

[1] Kohl's Reisen in Dänemark, i. p. 283. See also p. 91.

Magister Niels, during the general's life-time, had been constantly quarreling with him, he nevertheless came without delay, having with him a sharp axe. He then shut himself in the chapel with the corpse, but what passed between them no one knows; only such a noise was heard within that the whole mansion shook with it. At length all was again silent, and Master Niels came out with his axe, looking deadly pale. From that time the general remained quiet in his coffin, and was buried with great pomp in Ulvborg church.

TRADITIONS OF TOWNS AND OTHER PLACES.

THE RAMPARTS OF COPENHAGEN.

Many years ago, when the ramparts were being raised round Copenhagen, the earth always sank, so that it was not possible to get it to stand firm. They therefore took a little innocent girl, placed her on a chair by a table, and gave her playthings and sweetmeats. While she thus sat enjoying herself, twelve masons built an arch over her, which when completed they covered over with earth, to the sound of music with drums and trumpets. By this process they are, it is said, rendered immoveable.

It is a universal tradition that every kind of building is strengthened when any living being is buried beneath it. For such sacrifices, a lamb, a swine, or poultry, are generally chosen. Heinrich Heine (Die romantische Schule, 270), says on this subject: "In the middle age the opinion prevailed, that when any building was to be erected, something living must be killed, on the blood of which the foundation must be laid, by which process the building would continue firm and immoveable..... And in ballads and traditions the remembrance is still preserved how children or animals were slaughtered, for the purpose of strengthening large buildings with their blood."

THE IMAGE OF ST. OLUF.

St. Oluf had a chapel at Taasinge, in which his image was preserved. This it was the custom of the peasants to

carry about their fields, after they had put their seed in the ground, that they might have a plentiful harvest. It once happened that a countryman, who had been carrying the image about his fields, and ought to have restored it to its place in the chapel, thought it advisable to wait till the following day, but having no better place wherein to deposit it, he laid it in the oven. Next morning the servant maid having to bake, and not knowing that St. Oluf was there, put fire in the oven, and so the image was burnt. From that time it is said that the village has no good luck to expect.

SECRET PASSAGES UNDER AALBORG.

Under the town of Aalborg there are many secret passages, which are relics of the monkish times. The largest of these is said to lead from the old convent, used at present partly as an hospital and partly as a school, and is supposed to extend, under the fiord, as far as Sundby, where there was formerly a convent of nuns. The descent to this passage was well secured; for first it was closed with a brazen door, on which many beautiful figures were sculptured, and next with four doors of iron, one within another. One side passage led from this chief one to the church of St. Mary, under the mansion in which King Hans died. The ascent into the church was through a tomb. Another branch led from the chief passage to St. Budolf's church, and thence to the 'Murede Port's' bridge. A third branch led, in an opposite direction, from St. Mary's church, or from the convent, to the old castle of Aalborghuus.

A student once undertook to explore these passages, which he entered with a cord bound fast round his body. In one hand he had a sword, in the other a light. At the outside of the entrance he had placed people, who at a-

given sign should draw him back by means of the cord. But after he had been in two hours without making any sign, they drew the cord, the end of which was burnt off. The student was never again heard of.

OF CHURCHES AND CONVENTS.

OF CHURCHES.

When King Cnut, surnamed the Saint, was building the first churches in the country, he wished them to be so strong that they might last until the end of the world. He therefore prayed to God for direction how he might build strong and masterly. He then went to the sea-shore, where there lay much froth (skum). This he ordered the masons to take and to build with it. Through his sanctity this froth became as hard as stone, and the churches that have such walls will never decay as long as the world endures.

Of the so-called froth-walls many instances occur among the old country churches of Denmark. They consist of a porous mass which the peasants call fraa (froth), the production of which the master-masons declare is to them a perfect riddle. Notwithstanding its porosity, it is extremely durable. From the description it would seem to be of the nature of travertin or peperin, of which the ancient builders made use, and which is still much used in the South. As long as it lies in its natural bed it is so soft that it may be cut out with a spade, but by the influence of the atmosphere it increases in hardness from year to year.

THE TOWER OF ST. MARY'S IN COPENHAGEN.

In the year 1514, when a spire was being placed on the tower of St. Mary's cathedral in Copenhagen, a carpenter's man had an altercation with his master, and in his anger boasted that he was as able a workman as himself. To make an end of the dispute, the master laid a beam out from the top of the tower, took an axe in his hand, went out on the beam, and struck the axe fast in the end of it. Having done this, and being safely returned, he ordered

his man to go and fetch him the axe. The man went without hesitation, but while standing on the end of the beam, and in the act of seizing the axe, it seemed to him that there were two, and he asked: "Master! which is it to be?" The master then knew how it was with him, and answered only: "God be merciful to thy poor soul!" At the same instant the man reeled from the beam.

A story nearly the same is related of the tower of St. Cnut's church in Odense, but in which the man, when on the end of the beam, looked over the town, and in his trepidation cried: "Master! Bulbro is coming nearer!" Bulbro is a small place near Odense.

THE CHIMES IN THE TOWER OF ST. NICHOLAS.

During the great fire at Copenhagen, and while the church of St. Nicholas was enveloped in flames, the tower long stood reeling from one side to another. People, too, relate who heard it, that the chimes in the meanwhile played of themselves the psalm: "God knows how near me is mine end."

THE SEA-TROLL IN THE ISSEFIORD.

In former days there dwelt in the Issefiord[1] a Troll, who was accustomed to stop every vessel that entered the fiord and demand a man from each. This calamity had been long endured, when it became known that the power of the Troll would last until the head of Pope Lucius should be shown him, who had been beheaded in Rome many centuries before. Some monks were accordingly forthwith sent to Rome to fetch the head. When the ship returned and was about to run into the fiord, the Troll made his appearance; but as soon as they held forth the head and the Troll got a sight of it, he with a horrid howl

[1] The Issefiord or firth runs from the Cattegat in various directions into Seeland. The city of Roeskilde is built on the south end of one of its arms called the Roeskilde fiord.

transformed himself into a rock. In Roeskilde cathedral many representations are to be seen which may be explained by this tradition.

ROESKILDE CATHEDRAL.

In the year 1084 Roeskilde cathedral was dedicated to Pope Lucius, who in the year 253 had suffered martyrdom, he having offered to be the patron saint of the church. For before the church was built, Bishop Svend Norbagge[1] despatched two canons to Rome to fetch some relic of a saint to whom the church might be dedicated. The immense number of relics of all sorts which they found there caused them no small embarrassment, but in order to choose a fitting one, they sought to strengthen their judgement by prayer. While thus engaged in devotion, one of the canons fell asleep, when Pope Lucius appeared before him, proffered his patronage, and gave such an exact description of his skull, that they easily found it among all the others. This skull was accordingly chosen and conveyed to Denmark, where, set in gold, it was long preserved as the most precious possession of Roeskilde cathedral.

VEIBY CHURCH.

In Veiby church in Seeland there was formerly kept a man's dried-up hand. Of this it is related that it had belonged to a man, who many years before was burnt for having murdered his father, and therefore could not be consumed by the fire.

KALLUNDBORG CHURCH.

When Esbern Snare[2] was building Kallundborg[3] church,

[1] See page 224. [2] See page 226.

[3] A town on the west coast of Seeland. Esbern Snare's church still exists, the five towers of which render it a conspicuous object for miles around. In the castle, not a vestige of which remains, Christian II. died

the work at first did not succeed, but there came a Troll to him offering his service, and with him Esbern Snare made an agreement, that when the church was finished, he should either say what the Troll's name was, or should give him his heart and his eyes. The work now went on well, and was supported by stone pillars. But when it was nearly complete, one half-pillar only being wanting, Esbern Snare began to feel alarmed, because he was still ignorant how the Troll was called. He went wandering about the fields sorrowing, and one day, being weary and sad, he lay down on Ulshöi Banke to rest. He there heard a Troll-wife within the mound saying: "Be still, my child, to-morrow Fin thy father will come and give thee Esbern Snare's eyes and heart to play with." On hearing these words, Esbern became himself again and returned to the church. At this moment the Troll entered, bringing the half-pillar that was wanting, when Esbern, on seeing him, saluted him by his name of Fin. Hearing this, the Troll was so angry, that he flew off through the air with the half-pillar; and therefore the church has only three pillars and a half [1].

Kallundborg church has five spires, built by Esbern Snare. The highest, which stands in the middle, is for his mother, and the four standing about it for his four daughters, one of whom was lame, and therefore one of the spires is less than the others.

RACHLÖV CHURCH.

To the north-east of Kallundborg lies the village of Rachlöv; but the church is a considerable distance from it in the open field. This circumstance is thus accounted

(1559), after a confinement of twenty-seven years, viz. seventeen at Sönderborg and ten at Kallundborg. King Albert of Sweden was also imprisoned in the castle of Kallundborg by Queen Margaret.

[1] See pp. 39, 101.

for. While the village church was building, it was found that what had been built up during the day was constantly thrown down in the night. It was therefore determined, by the advice of some sagacious persons, to place two red bulls on the spot, for the purpose of driving away the evil spirits; and this was done accordingly. But on the following morning, one of the bulls was found killed outright, near to the town; the other was discovered standing out in the field on an eminence, wounded and misused. Hence the folks clearly enough saw that the evil spirits had no power in this place, and therefore resolved there to erect their church.

THE ALTAR-PIECE IN SORÖ CHURCH.

The altar-piece in Sorö church represents the Last Supper. It was at first determined that the twelve apostles should be painted after the twelve professors of Sorö Academy, but as they could not agree who should be Judas, twelve peasants were fetched from the village of Haverup, after whom the twelve apostles were painted. Of these, Andrew the shoemaker offered himself for Judas, but afterwards sank into all kinds of depravity, and things went extremely ill with him.

BLOOD SPOTS ON THE WALL OF KARISE CHURCH.

A hunter in Stevnsherred was desirous of being an unerring shot. He therefore took the sacrament, but held the bread in his mouth until he came out of church. He then loaded his piece, put the bread into it, and fired it against the church wall. On the place where he struck the wall there is a hole, out of which blood flows, and which may still be seen.

Of another huntsman it is said that he stuck the wafer on the church wall and shot at it.

THE CHURCH AT FALSTER.

There once dwelt on the island of Falster a lady of rank, who was extremely rich, but had neither son nor daughter to inherit her wealth. She therefore resolved to make a pious use of it, and caused a church to be built that was both spacious and magnificent. When the church was finished, she caused altar-candles to be lighted, and going through the quire to the altar, she cast herself on her knees and prayed to God that, in reward for her pious gift, he would add as many years to her life as the church should stand. Then from time to time her relations and servants died; but she who had preferred so foolish a prayer, continued to live. At length she had no longer a friend or relation to converse with, and saw children grow up, become aged and die, and their children again grow old, while she herself was wasting through extreme age, so that she gradually lost the use of all her senses. Sometimes, however, she recovered her voice, though for one hour only at midnight every Christmas. On one of these nights she desired to be laid in an oaken coffin and placed in the church, that she might there die; but that the priest should attend her every Christmas night to receive her commands. From that time her coffin has stood in the church, but she has not yet been permitted to die. Every Christmas night the priest comes to her, lifts the lid of the coffin, and as he gradually raises it, she rises slowly up. When sitting up, she asks: "Is my church yet standing?" And when the priest answers "Yes," she sighs and says:—

> "Ak! give Gud, at min Kirke var brændt;
> Thi da er först al min Jammer fuldendt!"
>
> Ah! God grant that my church were burnt;
> For then only would my affliction be ended.

She then sinks back again into the coffin, the priest lets

the lid fall, and does not come again until the next Christmas night.

MARIBO CHURCH.

In Maribo church, by one of the pillars, there is set up the image of a monk pointing to another pillar, in which, the tradition tells us, a treasure was hidden by the monks when they were compelled to leave the place[1].

AARHUUS CATHEDRAL.

Aarhuus cathedral was, in the time of Catholicism, dedicated to St. Clement; because that saint, after his martyrdom, was cast ashore, bound to an anchor, near Aarhuus, after having been tossed about on the ocean for eleven hundred years. He was there buried, and in memory of him his figure with the anchor is to be seen on the altar-piece.

Before the Reformation, it was a custom in the same cathedral, during the solemn service of Good Friday eve, to send forth a tremendous voice, through a hole in the vaulting of the church, saying: "Ever accursed be Judas!" On this occasion a large hunting horn was used, which till our time was preserved in the church. During the malediction a hollow, trembling voice was sent forth from the upper gallery of the north transept, uttering the words of Judas: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."

RIBE CATHEDRAL.

In Ribe cathedral there is a door called Cat's-head door (Kathöved Dör), in memory of an old tradition, to wit,

[1] The learned antiquary Arndt is reported to have declared that he found in the Vatican library a memorandum stating that a treasure of manuscripts and documents was concealed in a pillar of Maribo church.

that once on a time a poor skipper belonging to Ribe came to an island where the inhabitants were plagued with an overwhelming number of mice. Luckily he had a cat on board, which he took on shore with him, and so destroyed or drove off a vast number of them. His cat he sold to the inhabitants, for which having received a considerable sum, he sailed home and returned to the island with a whole cargo of cats, by which traffic he became so rich, that he had whereon to live for the rest of his life. When the hour of death drew nigh, he resolved to employ his wealth in building a church in Ribe, as a memorial of which benefit there is, we are told, a representation in the said church of a cat and four mice.

The above-mentioned skipper may be styled the Danish Whittington. There was also an Italian Whittington, of whom it is related, in a letter from Lorenzo Magalotti to Ottavio Falconieri (Idelers Handb. der ital. Lit. i. 355), that he, Ansaldo degli Ormanni by name, having arrived at one of the Canary islands, was invited by the king to dinner. During the repast he observed that all the attendants went about with long sticks, for the purpose of driving away the rats, which made constant attacks on the viands. Seeing this, he hastened to his ship and returned with two cats, which in an incredibly short time made an appalling slaughter among the enemy. He made a present of these cats to the king, who in return bestowed on him immense riches. On his return to his native country he related how he had acquired his wealth; whereupon a certain Giocondo de' Fisanti resolved on trying his luck there. Having sold his house, he embarked with a quantity of pearls and other precious things, in the belief that the king would no doubt prize such gifts much more highly than two cats. On his arrival he accordingly presented his gifts to the king, who valued them much, but having nothing which he considered more precious than the two cats, he gave one of them to Giocondo, who by his speculation was reduced to a state of poverty.

THE CHURCH AT ERRITSÖ.

Many years ago there lived at Erritsö, near Fredericia, a very poor man, who one day said: "If I had a large sum of money, I would build a church for the parish." The following night he dreamed that if he went to the

south bridge at Veile, he would make his fortune. He followed the intimation, and strolled backwards and forwards on the bridge, until it grew late, but without seeing any sign of his good fortune. When just on the point of returning, he was accosted by an officer, who asked him why he had spent the whole day so on the bridge. He told him his dream, on hearing which the officer related to him in return, that he also, on the preceding night, had dreamed, that in a barn at Erritsö, belonging to a man whose name he mentioned, a treasure lay buried. But the name he mentioned was the man's own, who prudently kept his own counsel, hastened home, and found the treasure in his barn. The man was faithful to his word and built the church.

There is a story nearly similar to the above related of a treasure at Tauslet on the isle of Alsen. The reader will, no doubt, be agreeably surprised at meeting with a tradition of near kin to the foregoing, respecting the reputed founder of Dundonald castle, in Ayrshire:

Donald Din, or Din Donald, was originally a poor man, but had the faculty of dreaming lucky dreams. Upon one occasion he dreamed, thrice in one night, that if he were to go to London Bridge, he would become a wealthy man. He went accordingly, saw a man looking over the parapet of the bridge, whom he accosted courteously, and, after a little conversation, intrusted with the secret of the occasion of his visiting London Bridge. The stranger told him that he had made a very foolish errand, for he himself had once had a similar vision, which directed him to go to a certain spot in Ayrshire, in Scotland, where he would find a vast treasure; and, for his part, he had never once thought of obeying the injunction. From his description of the spot, the sly Scotsman at once perceived that the treasure in question must be concealed in no other place than his own humble *kail-yard* at home, to which he immediately repaired, in full expectation of finding it. Nor was he disappointed; for, after destroying many good and promising cabbages, and completely cracking credit with his wife, who esteemed him mad, he found a large potful of gold coin, with the proceeds of which he built a stout castle for himself, and became the founder of a flourishing family [1].

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[1] Chambers, Pop. Rh. p. 12.

THE ALTAR-PIECE IN SLESWIG CATHEDRAL.

Master Hans Brüggemann, born in Husum, was a skilful artizan and able man. It was he who made the beautiful altar-piece for the monks of Bordesholm, which, in the year 1666, was removed to the cathedral of Sleswig, on which, it is said, he and his men laboured for seven years, and of which every figure was steeped in oil, to prevent injury from worms. When the work was finished, King Christian II. and his queen Elizabeth came to see it; on which occasion, Brüggemann, availing himself of the opportunity, carved likenesses of them both in wood, which he placed on two pillars on each side of the altar.

When the Lübeckers saw this work, they wished Hans Brüggemann to execute an altar-piece for them equally beautiful. This he not only engaged to do, but also to make one still more beautiful. Hereat the monks of Bordesholm were stung by jealousy, and gave him something which caused a fluxion and weakness of his eyes, so that he could no longer work. He died in the town of Eiderstädt, near Bordesholm.

Of the altar-piece of the church of Nörre-Broby in Fyen it is also said, that when the artist had completed it, he was asked whether he could execute another better or equally good, and on his answering in the affirmative, 'they' put out his eyes. See a similar story of a clock at Cambray in Wolf, Niederl. Sagen, p. 444.

TRADITIONS RELATING TO MANSIONS.

HERLUFSHOLM.

When Fru Birgitte Giöe was dead and the council of the realm had the direction of the school of Herlufsholm, it reached the ears of some of the family that the deed of gift was lost, a circumstance from which they hoped to derive advantage. The rector and the clergyman of the place were consequently summoned to Copenhagen, and found themselves in no trifling embarrassment by their inability

to find the document. But when the priest, full of anxiety, had lain down on his bed, the night previous to his departure for Copenhagen, Fru Birgitte Giöe appeared before him; for she was unwilling that after her death the school should come to nothing, through the avarice of her family. The priest saw her go to an old table, and strike several blows on one of its legs. At this he was greatly surprised, and the following morning, on examining the table, he found, in a secret drawer, the lost document, which, accompanied by the rector, he produced in Copenhagen, and thus saved the school of Herlufsholm.

VAARGAARD.

Many years ago there dwelt at Vaargaard a lady named Fru Ingeborg, the widow of one of the family of Scheel, a great oppressor of the peasantry, whom he deprived of a meadow called Agersted Enge. But if the lord had been unjust and cruel to his tenants, his widow was still more so. Once on the anniversary of her husband's death, being on her way to church, she said to her coachman, "I would fain know how things go with my poor husband." To which the coachman, whose name was Claus, and who was a sly knave, answered: "Ay, gracious lady! but that is not easy to say, though he will certainly not be suffering from cold; for it is no doubt warm enough where he is." At this the lady was highly exasperated and threatened to take his life, if on the third Sunday following he did not bring her intelligence how it fared with her late husband. Claus, who well knew that his lady mistress never failed to keep her word when she promised any evil, resolved in the first instance to consult with the priest at Albek, who was as stiff in his book as any bishop, and understood equally well both how to keep people in their graves and to call them forth. But this priest, on consulting with a relation, was apprehensive that the task would

prove too hard for him. Fortunately, however, the coachman had a brother who was a priest in Norway; of him therefore it would be safest to seek counsel, seeing that the Norwegian priests are more cunning in such matters than any others. Claus consequently made a trip to Norway, and found his brother, who instantly addressed him with: "Welcome, Claus! things must, indeed, be desperate with you, since you come all the way to me!" From these words the coachman saw plainly that his brother was perfectly aware how matters stood. On the following day Claus asked him for advice and help. After some consideration, he answered: "I can, it is true, compel your dead master to re-appear; but it will prove a dangerous business if you are afraid of him, for you must yourself tell him your message." It was now resolved that on the following night at twelve o'clock they would go to a cross road in a large forest, and summon him forth. At the hour and place appointed the priest began to read so that the coachman's hair stood on end. At once a dreadful uproar was heard, and a red-hot chariot, with horses spouting fire on every side, came dashing through the forest, and stopt at the place where they were standing. Claus instantly knew his master again, although he was red-hot. "Who will speak with me?" roared the master from the chariot. Claus took off his hat and said: "I have to greet my gracious master from my gracious mistress, and to inquire how he fares since his death." "Tell her," answered his master, "that I am in hell, where there is a seat making for her, which only wants the last step; when that is laid down she will be fetched, if she does not restore Agersted Enge! But as a proof that thou hast spoken with me, I will give thee my wedding ring, which thou canst show her." The priest then whispered to the coachman that he should hold out his hat, and in the same moment the ring fell into the hat, through which it

burned a hole and fell on the ground, from which Claus took it up. In the next moment, both chariot and horses were away.

On the third Sunday Claus was standing outside of Vaar churchyard when Fru Ingeborg was driven by. On seeing him the gracious lady instantly inquired what message he had brought, when the coachman related to her all that he had seen and heard, and gave her the ring, which she instantly recognised. "It is well," said she, "thou hast saved thy life. If I am to be with my husband when I am dead, be it so, but Agersted Enge I will never give back!"

Shortly after there was a pompous spectacle in Vaar church. It was the gracious lady's funeral. But she soon re-appeared by night, and committed so much mischief in the castle yard, that the miller and the mill-folks ran to the priest at Albek, who read over her, conjured her out of the yard, and laid her in a pond hard by called Pulsen. Beyond this he had no power over her, but is obliged to allow her every year to approach a cock's step nearer to Vaargaard; and it is, moreover, said that whenever in this manner she reaches the spot from whence she was driven by the priest, Vaargaard will sink in ruin. On the place where she was conjured into Pulsen not a blade of grass ever grows, and by the scorched-up streaks in the field it may be seen how many cock's steps she has already gone.

TRADITIONS OF PRIESTS AND WISE MEN.

ST. ANDREW OF SLAGELSE.

In the year 1205 there lived in Slagelse a priest of St. Peter's church who was known by the name of Holy Anders. Of this holy man it is related, that with eleven others he sailed to the Holy Land; but that when on the

eve of returning, and the wind being fair, he would not proceed on the voyage until he had heard mass at Joppa. When the mass was ended and his companions were already on their way back, he found himself in much tribulation on the sea-shore viewing the distant vessel, when a man rode up to him and desired him to mount before him. Anders did so; but as they rode along he fell asleep in the stranger's arms. On waking he looked about him with astonishment, for he found himself on a mound just outside of Slagelse, and had, nevertheless, been to St. James of Compostella in Portugal [1], to St. Olaf's in Drontheim, and many other holy places. But a long time elapsed before his companions, who had left him at Joppa, returned to Denmark, whereat all people greatly marvelled.

He was so holy a man that when he performed his devotions in the open air, he was wont to hang his cap and gloves on the sun-beams [2], and thereby acquired an extraordinary reputation, and at length became the patron saint of Slagelse. It once happened that when he would thus hang his gloves on a sun-beam, they fell to the ground, at which he was deeply afflicted and asked our Lord, in what respect he had sinned, seeing that the miracle no longer succeeded, and was then given to understand that one of the inmates of the monastery had stolen a hedge-stake, and so defiled the sacred community. The mound on which St. Anders was awakened, acquired from that event the name of the Hvilehöi (mound of rest), which it retains until this day.

St. Anders interested himself also in the welfare of the people of Slagelse, by going with their petition to King

[1] Sic.

[2] The monks of Adewert also hung their caps and cowls on the sun-beams. See Wolf, Niederl. S. p. 411.

Valdemar, in consequence of which the king promised to add to the land belonging to Slagelse as much as St. Anders could ride round on a colt a day old, during the time the king was in the bath. He took the king at his word, and rode with such speed that the courtiers were obliged, from time to time, to run to the king in the bath, saying that if he did not make haste, St. Anders would ride round the whole country. To this act the town of Slagelse is indebted for its extensive town fields.

On the Hvilehöi there stands a cross with the inscription: "In memoriam divi Andreæ, quiescentis Joppæ et heic loci expergefacti." When this cross was once suffered to fall into decay, a general murrain among the cattle ensued, but which ceased the instant a new cross was set up.

MASTER LAURIDS.

In Hadsherred in Jutland there was once a priest by name Master Laurids. He could lay the dead and call them from their graves, and, consequently, it hardly need be said, had many contests with the devil, in all which, however, his Satanic Majesty invariably came off second best.

It once happened to Master Laurids, when returning from a short journey, that on passing Skandrup church, his horses stopt, and were unable to draw the carriage from the spot; but Master Laurids, who well understood how matters were, shook his head and ordered his man to take off the right hind-wheel and lay it in the basket behind; for he knew that it was the devil who had placed himself on it for the purpose of making the carriage heavy. This was more than the devil had bargained for, for he had now to get down, take his station under the carriage, and hold it up. In this fashion Master Laurids made him follow during the whole night. When at length he

set him at liberty, the fiend cast the axletree from his shoulder with such force that it was broken by the fall, at which Master Laurids smiling, said: "See! he can do that yet!"

That the devil on such occasions must go under the carriage instead of the fourth wheel was a universal popular belief not only in Denmark, but in other countries. A Catholic legend relates a similar miracle of St. Benedict, which has supplied the subject of a well-known composition by the painter Ditlef Lindau at Rome.

THE PRIEST OF NÖRRE-VILSTRUP.

At the close of the last century there lived in the village of Nörre-Vilstrup, near Veile[1], a priest who knew more than his Paternoster, and who employed the extraordinary power, which he had acquired in the Black School[2], for the profit and happiness of his parishioners; on which account he was much beloved and respected. For the sake of this power, he had, it was said, sworn to wear only one garter; and it was well known to all that he never did wear two.

To the parsonage there was attached a little thicket, which lay at a short distance from the village, from which the priest's kindling wood and fire-wood were sometimes stolen. He one day asked his servants whether they had no fire-wood to fetch from thence? To which they answered that for some time past there was none. "You may at all events," said he, "take a wagon and drive out." They did so, and there found a man from the village who had piled up a large quantity of brushwood, which he was about to carry off, but which the priest's men took away and carted home.

The provost Petrus Ægidii at Bröns was a magician. A youth, who wanted to go to Ribe, took the provost's horse from the meadow; but the

[1] A small town on the east side of Jutland.

[2] See more about the Black School in North German Popular Traditions.

animal would not go forwards, and the lad could not get off his back, even when a couple of millers' men endeavoured to assist him. He was therefore obliged to ride to the priest. "Art thou there?" said the good man; "go and take the horse back to the field, and play me no more such pranks [1]."

ST. KIELD OF VIBORG[2].

He was a very holy man, performed many miracles, was on that account made bishop of Viborg, and after his death canonized by the pope.

Before his sanctity was known, he was once expelled by the monks from the convent, and driven away; but meeting one of the conventual servants, who had been sent out to fetch water, he besought him to let him drink out of his pitcher. He did so, when Kield turned the water to wine, which he ordered the servant to take to the convent with his greeting to the brothers, and the request that they would drink that wine to his health. He was then speedily recalled and received with great joy.

One morning early, when reading mass at the altar, the lights were suddenly extinguished, so that it was quite dark; but he, nevertheless, continued reading the mass.

After his death, the report of his sanctity reached the pope at Rome, who caused his name to be enrolled in the catalogue of saints. His body was laid in a costly shrine, and suspended by golden chains from the vaulted roof of the chapel. His richly gilded coffin, called St. Kield's ark, was held in great veneration until the Reformation, when it was taken down and placed behind the altar in the cathedral, where it perished in the great fire.

[1] Rhode, Haderslev-Amt, quoted by Müllenhoff, p. 600.

[2] The oldest and most remarkable town in Jutland. From the remotest times the Danish monarchs on their accession received homage at Viborg, and here were held the assemblies of the States of the kingdom. Its venerable cathedral perished by fire in 1726. In its crypt masses were sung for the soul of the murdered king, Eric Glipping (A.D. 1287), which were continued till long after the Reformation.

TREASURES AND TREASURE-DIGGERS.

THE TREASURE IN HVIRVEL BAKKE.

Hvirvel Bakke is said to be quite full of gold, whence it is that on every Christmas eve it appears to be on fire. If any one would only venture to shoot over the bakke[1], he might no doubt take the whole of it, but now-a-days no one dares do such a thing.

THE TREASURE IN DAUGBIERG-DAUS.

At Daugstrup, not far from Viborg, there is a barrow called Daugbierg-Daus. Of this barrow it is said that it is always enveloped in a blue mist, and that under it lies a large copper kettle full of money. One night two peasants went to dig for this treasure, and had already proceeded so far as to get hold of the two handles of the kettle; when all sorts of wonderful things took place, for the purpose of diverting them from their undertaking. At one moment they saw a large black dog with a red-hot tongue, then came a cock drawing a load of hay[2], next came a chariot with four black horses; but in spite of all this the men did not allow themselves to speak, and went on with their digging. At length a clown passing by, stopt before them and said: "See! Daugbierg is on fire!" and when they looked in that direction, it was precisely as if the whole village stood in a blaze[3]. At this moment

[1] Bakke is a small hill or rising ground. [2] See p. 119.

[3] A similar superstition prevailed in Scotland. About a century ago, we are told, that the laird of Craufurdland and his domestics, when on the point of drawing up a pot of gold from the bottom of a pool, heard a noise overhead, which caused them to let go their prize and look upwards. They perceived a terrific figure standing on the top of the hill, using violent gesticulations, and crying,

Tip tow!
Craufurdland 's a' in a low!

Whereupon the laird, believing that the evil one had set fire to his house, in order to divert him from his researches, left the scene, followed by his

one of the men forgot to keep silence, and at the instant he began to cry out the treasure sank, and although they have often since endeavoured to raise it, the Trolls have always prevented them by their sorcery.

In digging up a treasure the strictest silence is necessary; hence Oehlenschlæger in his poem 'Skattegraveren' (The Treasure-digger) says:

Men hvis et Ord du taler,	But if a word thou utter,
Forsvinder den igien.	It vanishes again.

THE TREASURE ON FUUR.

The little isle of Fuur in the Liimfiord rests on a vast stone, in the middle of which dwells a Troll. When the shepherds in the field place their ear to the ground, they sometimes hear him locking and unlocking his great money chests; and a peasant, who for three Christmas nights went thither at midnight, saw at the third time, the Troll sitting on the hillock displaying all his treasures. If any one shoots over such things, he can freely take of them as much as he will, and so did this peasant. But when he was on his return home and very near his dwelling, it seemed to him to be in flames. In his alarm he cast from him all he had taken, and when he reached home all was safe, but the treasure was gone.

On the north side of the isle a small part of the stone may be clearly seen among high, heath-grown hills, and many names are there inscribed of persons who have visited the spot. On a level with the earth is a hole through which a person can enter the stone, but it is not known how far any one can go, as the greater number do not venture beyond five steps.

THE TREASURE IN LODAL.

In Sallingherred there is a valley called Lodal, where formerly a light was seen burning every night. But it

servants, and ran home to save what he could. Of course there was no fire whatever at the house.—Chambers, Popular Rhymes, etc. p. 13.

happened that a Holsteiner came to the place, who desired to be shown the way to Lodal, it having been revealed to him in a dream, that on the spot where a light was to be seen burning he should dig and find a treasure. He dug accordingly and found in the earth a capacious copper kettle full of gold, but upon the gold there lay a large black poodle[1] with a ring round its neck. This he carefully lifted from the kettle, laid it on his great coat, and so got possession of the treasure, of which he distributed a portion to the peasants who had assisted him, and then departed. From that time the light ceased to burn; but sometimes the dog may be seen running about in Lodal.

TRADITIONS OF ROBBERS.

THYRE BOLÖXE AND HER SONS.

Close along an arm of the Issefiord in Seeland, the road passes through Borreveile forest, where is yet to be seen the so-called Thyre's cave.

This Thyre, surnamed Bolöxe, with her twelve sons were notorious robbers, but being at length captured, were all executed at Roeskilde[2]. The following tradition concerning them is still current among the peasantry thereabouts.

It often happens, when any one drives past the cave by night, that the horses suddenly begin to sweat violently, and are scarcely able to drag the carriage. A countryman, who on such an occasion descended from his vehicle and peeped through the left side of the headstall, saw that he had Thyre Bolöxe and her twelve sons sitting behind. His only resource was to take off the hind wheel and lay it in the vehicle[3]; for by so doing all such spectres are compelled to run under the carriage, for the purpose of holding up the axle-tree.

[1] See pages 119, 263. [2] In the year 1716. [3] See page 260.

STÆRK OLGER.

In Ugilt krat (thicket), between Hiöring and Fladstrand, when the country thereabouts had much forest land, there was a robber who called himself Stærk (Strong) Olger or Ole. He robbed and murdered whenever he had an opportunity, but he was particularly notorious for murdering pregnant women. At length the men having armed themselves, surrounded the entire wood and captured him, when he thus confessed: "It is well that you have caught me this time; for henceforth no bond would have bound or hand held me; for I had already eaten the hearts of six unborn children! Could I but have got the seventh!"

VOLDBORG'S DAY.

On Voldborg's day, that is the day preceding Whitsunday, there was in former times a great merry-making throughout the country, or, as it was called, *the riding in of summer*. The youth of both sexes prepared themselves for the festival, and decorated themselves with their best for the procession. The young men's procession, in which all were on horseback, was headed by two stewards, who rode forward to announce their approach. These were followed by two old men, each holding in his hand a long pole decorated with ribands, garlands, silk handkerchiefs, and whatever else might appear showy. After them came the Count of May (Maigreve) with his two attendants, and lastly the whole procession, two and two, all clad in blue or red frocks, with white napkins from the shoulder down under the opposite arm, and ribands fluttering in their hats. The May-count had two garlands, one over each shoulder, while every other had one only. In the middle of the procession rode the musicians, playing on violins, drums and fifes. When they came to a boundary, a garland was laid on the place of entrance; and when in the villages or at the mansions they met any young females,

they threw garlands to them, which was an invitation to their guild or feast. When they entered a town or village, both stewards went to a house and begged that the procession might enter; and when permission was granted, they rode thrice round the court, and on passing the windows saluted the inmates. They then dismounted, and the leading singers began to sing, the rest, at the end of every verse, falling in with "med Glæde" (with joy). On coming to a particular verse, two of the party went to the church, where they knelt on the threshold, and while in that position the others sang the rest of the song. They afterwards danced a while, and were regaled with beer and brandy, and sometimes received money also. They then remounted their horses, rode again round the court, and proceeded further in the same order.

When the girls *ran summer in*, they assembled where the festival or guild was to be, clad in green with white napkins, and garlands on their heads and over their shoulders. Thence they proceeded to the fields and formed themselves in a circle, when the steward tried a garland on each, until he found one that it fitted: she was then Countess of May (Maigrevinde). The procession then went its round. Whoever would receive them raised a pole adorned with flowers and garlands, as a sign. According to other accounts, the Count of May, on their return, cast a garland on the girl he chose for Countess.

FRIAR RUUS[1]. (Continued from p. 179.)

In consequence of his skill in the culinary art, and of

[1] From 'Die Deutschen Volksbücher von Karl Simrock,' 6 Bd. As a more detailed narrative of the doings of Friar Ruus, after he became head cook, may not be uninteresting to the reader, I add the sequel of his story, abridged from the metrical account of him in the above-named work, which I had not at hand when translating the portion of his history already given. In the German story he is called Rausch, which is the same as the Danish Ruus, and signifies *drunkenness*, *debauchery*.

certain secret services rendered by him to the abbot and monks of Esrom, Ruus was, by universal suffrage, elected a member of the brotherhood, in which character he sojourned among them during a period of seven years. Having much leisure on his hands, he was in the habit of sitting at the convent gate and amusing himself with cutting oaken cudgels. On being asked for what purpose he designed the cudgels, he answered, that it was well to be prepared in case of thieves coming by night. Shortly after, a dispute ensues among the brethren about a female, one party being headed by the abbot, the other by the prior. Both parties apply to Ruus for cudgels, and both receive a supply. A battle then takes place between them in the church, where they are assembled at matins, during which Ruus extinguishes the lights, and in the heat of the mêlée hurls a heavy bench in the midst of the combatants. After the limbs of many are broken, and others more or less maimed, Ruus, with a sanctified countenance, appears among them with a light, reproves them for their unseemly conduct, and exhorts them to peace and concord.

Some time after this event, Ruus goes out to amuse himself, and forgets to prepare supper for the convent. As he is hurrying home he sees a cow grazing, which he kills, taking with him a hind quarter. In the preceding part we have seen that the owner of the cow lies in wait for the thief and, while concealed in a hollow tree, sees Lucifer with a company of devils assemble on its summit. These recount to their prince their several exploits, Ruus among the rest, who promises to bring with him all the brotherhood, but that they should previously murder each other. When the devils had taken flight, the peasant hastened to the convent, where he related to the abbot all he had heard while in the tree. At his recital the holy man was not a little terrified, and, having assembled the fraternity, related to them all that the man had told him. There-

upon they betake themselves to prayer, and ring for mass, when the abbot, taking Ruus with him, orders him to remain, without stirring from the spot during the whole mass. Upon Ruus saying he could no longer stay, during the administration of the sacrament, the abbot conjures him into the form of a horse. On promising to do no more harm, he is set free and passes over to England.

In England he enters the king's fair daughter, whereupon her father sends for all the wise and learned men from Paris and elsewhere; but not one of them is powerful enough to cast forth the evil spirit from the body of the princess. At length the demon himself exclaims: "I am Brother Ruus. No one can expel me from this fair vessel, save the abbot of Esrom, to whom I have sworn obedience." This dignitary had, it seems, in the mean while, become as holy again as ever. The abbot is, consequently, sent for, who casts out the evil spirit, commanding him to stand before him in a horse's form; when, to the great astonishment of the king and all present, the abbot binds him with a heavy chain.

Seeing a quantity of lead lying close by, the abbot requested, as his sole reward, to have as much of it, for the roof of his convent, as Ruus could carry on his back. Ruus carries accordingly the enormous weight of three hundred thousand pounds. The king and the abbot then sit down to dinner, but before they have finished their repast, Ruus appears before them, telling them he has carried the lead and waits for further orders, asking, at the same time, whether he should take the palace and set it by the side of the convent. The abbot desires him to let the palace stand, and merely conduct him safely back to Esrom. Then taking leave of the king, after giving him his blessing, the holy man gives his hand to the devil [1],

[1] According to the Danish metrical version, Ruus takes the abbot on his back. Thiele, ii. p. 148, 1st edit.

who forthwith sets him down safe and sound at his own gate. The fiend then asks where his future residence is to be, when the abbot assigns him a neighbouring hill, in which he is to sojourn till doomsday.

DANISH POPULAR BELIEF[1].

1. If a girl wishes to know what sort of a husband she is to have, she must on New Year's eve pour some melted lead into a glass of water, and the following morning observe what form it has assumed. If it resembles a pair of scissors, she will inevitably get a tailor; if a hammer, he will be a smith, etc. Another method, equally efficacious, is to break an egg into a glass of water, and judge from the figure it takes.

2. If girls are desirous of seeing their future husbands, let them on the eve of the Epiphany, before going to bed, repeat the following verses:—

> Ye three holy kings, to you I pray,
> That ye to-night will let me see
> Whose cloth I shall spread,
> Whose bed I shall make,
> Whose name I shall bear,
> Whose bride I shall be.

3. Another formula, probably to be repeated on the anniversary of St. Lucy (Dec. 13), is the following:—

> Lucy the gentle
> Shall give me to know
> Whose cloth I shall spread,
> Whose bed I shall make,
> Whose child I shall bear,
> Whose beloved I shall be,
> In whose arm I shall sleep.

4. It is a custom among the girls on St. John's day to gather St. John's-wort (hypericum) and place it between

[1] Thiele, iii. p. 95, *sqq.*, edit. 1820.

the beams under the roof, in order to form from it a judgement as to the future. The usual mode is, to place one plant for themselves and another for their sweetheart: if these grow together, it is a presage of a wedding. Or they set the plants between the beams, that they may know from them which of their relations shall have a long life, and which a short one. If the plant grows up towards the roof, it is a good sign; but if downwards, it betokens sickness and death [1].

5. When lads and lasses wish to know who shall remove from, and who shall stay in, the house, they cast a shoe over their head towards the door. If it fall so that the heel is turned towards the door, the party will remain; if the toe lies towards the door, they will remove.

6. If a person sees the cuckoo for the first time in the year while he is yet fasting, it is said, "The cuckoo befools us." If it is a male person, he shall not find any cattle or anything else he may seek after. If it is a girl, she must be on her guard against young men, lest she be befooled by them. If it is old folks, they have good reason to fear sickness.

7. If servants see the stork, for the first time in the

[1] The heathen festival of the Summer Solstice, or Death of Baldur, was, it seems, by the Christian missionaries made to coincide with the anniversary of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. Instead of Baldur's brow (see vol. i. p. 22, *note* [2]), the plant appropriated to the Christian holyday was the hypericum (or androsæmum), which in England also was once "considered as powerful for the expulsion of witches, and for the prognostication of the fates of young men and maidens. In Lower Saxony girls gather sprigs of it, and fasten them to the walls of their chamber. If the sprig, the next morning, remains fresh, a suitor may be expected; if it droops or withers, the maiden is destined to an early grave. Hyp. perforatum was the species used in this country." Walker's Flora of Oxfordshire, p. 217. Finn Magnusen, 'Den Ældre Edda,' i. p. 17. The name androsæmum (ἀνδρὸς αἷμα) is probably an allusion to the decollation of the Baptist; the plant containing a reddish fluid.

year, flying, it betokens that they will change their place during that year. If they see it standing, they will continue in their situation.

8. To discover a thief, particularly among the servants, it was formerly the custom to "make the sieve move." For this purpose, the master placed a sieve in equilibrium on the point of a pair of scissors, and then repeated the names of all the servants, at the same time watching the sieve, which would infallibly begin to move, when the thief was named.

9. When anything is stolen, recourse should be had to the "cunning folks," who have the faculty of forcing the thief to bring back the stolen property.

10. From Christmas day till New Year's day nothing that runs round may be set in motion; there must, consequently, be neither spinning nor winding [1].

11. On Christmas night at midnight the cattle rise in their stalls.

12. If, when sitting at table on Christmas eve, you wish to know whether any of those present will die before the next Christmas, go out silently and peep through one of the window panes: the person who appears sitting at table without a head, will die in the following year [2].

13. At a party it is not good for thirteen to sit down to table; for then one of them must die before a year is over.

14. To cut one's nails on a Friday brings luck.

15. When your nails or hair have been cut, the cuttings should either be burnt or buried; for if evil-disposed per-

[1] See p. 111, No. 48.

[2] In Anspach, when on Christmas or New Year's eve the candles of a Christmas tree are lighted, a person has only to observe the shadows of those present, to discover who will die in the coming year: in the shadow they will appear without heads.

sons get possession of them, they may bewitch the person who had borne them[1].

16. If a person finds a broken needle on the ground, before he has said his morning prayer, he will get either blows or bad words[2].

17. If the eyes of a corpse stand open, it betokens that one of the same family will die shortly after.

18. Clothes and linen that have belonged to one dead, soon decay and fall in pieces, even as the corpse rots in the grave.

19. A corpse must not be buried in the clothes of a living person; because as the clothes rot in the grave, so will the person to whom the clothes had belonged consume and waste.

20. When the tallow round a burning candle curls itself like a shaving, it forebodes the death of some one, most commonly of the person towards whom it points[3].

21. One must not weep over the dying, still less let tears fall on them; for then they cannot rest in the grave[4].

22. If in the morning blue spots appear on the body, they are the pinches of a spectre, and betoken the death of a relative or dear friend.

23. It was the custom formerly, when a person died, to cause the bells to toll immediately, while the departed soul was passing to heaven[5].

24. When dogs howl they forebode death.

[1] In Swabia the superstition is universal, that cuttings of hair must be burnt, or cast into running water; for if a bird should get them and carry them away, either the person's hair will fall off, or the witches may harm him. Journal von und für Deutschl. 1788, p. 441.

[2] Holberg's Uden Hoved og Hale, Act 1. Sc. 2.

[3] In England too, on the same occasion, we say, "See! there is a winding-sheet in the candle."

[4] See vol. i. p. 292.

[5] Our passing bell, still in use, though the belief in which it originated has long ceased to prevail.

25. When a magpie perches on a house, it is a sign that strangers are coming.

26. If swallows or storks build their nests on the house, they must not be disturbed: they bring good luck[1].

27. If you find a four-lobed clover, or a twin nut, or a skilling, you must keep it, as either of them brings luck.

28. On going out in the morning you should take notice whom you meet; it not being good to meet an old woman; nor is it a good sign if a hare runs across the way[2].

29. If a person wishes to see the devil or have any communication with him, he must walk round the church thrice, and at the third time stop at the church door, and either cry "Come out," or whistle through the key-hole.

30. If any one wishes to know whether a deceased person has had intercourse with the devil during his life, let him peep through the harness of the horses that draw the hearse; when, if such has been the case, he will see a black dog sitting behind the carriage.

31. Whoever possesses the book of Cyprian[3], can by reading out of it perform all sorts of conjurations; but when in possession of the book, a person cannot easily get rid of it; for whether he sells, or burns, or buries it, it always returns to its owner.

32. If any one has the book of Cyprian, he can read

[1] Olaf Tryggvason, although a Christian, observed whether the crow stood on its right or left foot, and predicted good or evil accordingly; whence his enemies nicknamed him *krâkabein* (crow-leg).

[2] "The coal-miners in the north of England account it specially unlucky to cross a woman on their way to the pit, and many a miner, if he catches a glimpse, or fancies he does so, of the flutter of a female dress, will turn on his heel and go back to bed again."—Morning Chronicle, Dec. 20th, 1849. This superstition was no doubt brought over by the Scandinavian settlers in the north of England.

[3] See pp. 186–188.

the devil to him; but he must be prepared to give him such work to do as will cause him annoyance. But it is a bad affair, if a person does not also know how to read him away again.

33. Only those children that are born on a Sunday or a holyday can see spirits[1].

34. If any one is afraid of spectres, let him strew flax-seed before his door; then no spirit can cross the threshold. A preventive equally efficacious is, to place one's slippers by the bed-side with the heels towards the bed[2]. Spectres may also be driven away by smoking the room with the snuff of a tallow candle; while wax lights attract them: hence it partly arises that churches are always haunted. Another preventive is, to place steel at the door.

35. If you nail a horseshoe fast to the step of the door, no spirit can enter[3].

36. When the peasant women have prepared their dough, they are accustomed to make a cross either on the dough or on the bread made from it; that the trolls may not injure it.

37. If a person enters the church too early in the morning, he may happen to see the dead, how they sit in the pews.

38. Trolls dare not pronounce the word *cross*, but call it merely "here and there."

39. When out fishing, men must be careful not to quarrel about the draught; nor must one envy another; as the fish will then instantly disappear from the spot.

40. If a person dies who, it is feared, will re-appear, as a preventive, let a basinful of water be thrown after the corpse, when it is carried out.

41. It is absurd to shoot at a spectre, as the bullet will

[1] See p. 203. [2] Holberg's Uden Hoved og Hale, Act i. Sc. 2.

[3] A superstition equally common in England.

return on him who shot it. But if the piece be loaded with a silver button, that will infallibly take effect[1].

42. The third night after burial the dead are wont to walk.

43. A pregnant woman must not walk over a place where a knife has been ground; as it causes a difficult delivery. But if she spits thrice on the spot, there is no danger.

44. If a child is weighed immediately after it is born, it will not thrive afterwards.

45. If a child be lifted out of one window and taken in through another, it will never grow bigger.

46. If a lying-in woman dies before delivery, she will give birth forty weeks after in the grave. For which reason, a needle, thread, scissors, &c. should be buried with her, that she may sew the baby-linen.

47. By the breast-bone of a Martinmas goose it may be known how the winter will be. The white in it is a sign of snow; but the brown forebodes very severe cold. It is also to be observed that the foremost part by the neck foretells of winter before Christmas; but the hinder part of winter after Christmas.

48. As the weather is on the day of the Seven Sleepers (July 27), so it will continue for seven weeks.

49. It often happens that mariners in the wide ocean see a ship—in all respects resembling a real one—sailing by, and at the same instant vanishing from their sight. It is the spectre-ship, and forebodes that a vessel will soon go to the bottom on that spot.

50. Every seventh year the cock lays an egg. When it is hatched, a basilisk comes forth, which kills people merely by looking at them. It is also said, that this animal can be killed only by holding a mirror before it, it being so ugly that it cannot survive the sight of itself[2].

[1] See pp. 6, 191, 192, note [b]. [2] See p. 212.

51. If you desire to know your future fortune at New Year's tide, take a loaf, a knife and a skilling, with which go out and look at the moon, when the new moon shines. If then you open a psalm-book, you will be able from what the place contains to judge of the most important things.

52. On the eve of Maundy Thursday the country folks cast axes and iron wedges on the sown fields, and fasten steel on all their doors, that the witches may not injure them.

53. A ringing in the left ear betokens that somebody is speaking ill of you; but good, if the ringing be in the right ear.

54. If any one goes to church on Maundy Thursday, and has, without knowing it, a pullet's egg (i. e. the first egg a hen lays) with him, he will see all the women that are witches with sieves or milk-pails on their heads.

55. The following is recommended as a remedy for the tooth-ache.—Take an elder-twig, first put it into your mouth, then stick it in the wall, saying, "Depart, thou evil spirit."

56. As a cure for the ague, it is good to stick a twig of elder in the ground, but without uttering a word while so doing. The disease will then pass into the twig, and attach itself to the first person that unfortunately approaches the spot.

57. In Norway it is thought unlucky to meet a hare, but lucky to meet a bear or a wolf.

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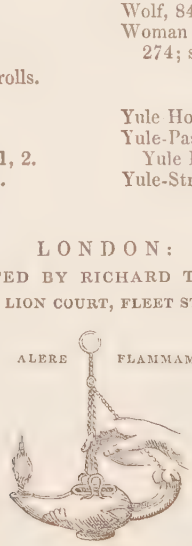

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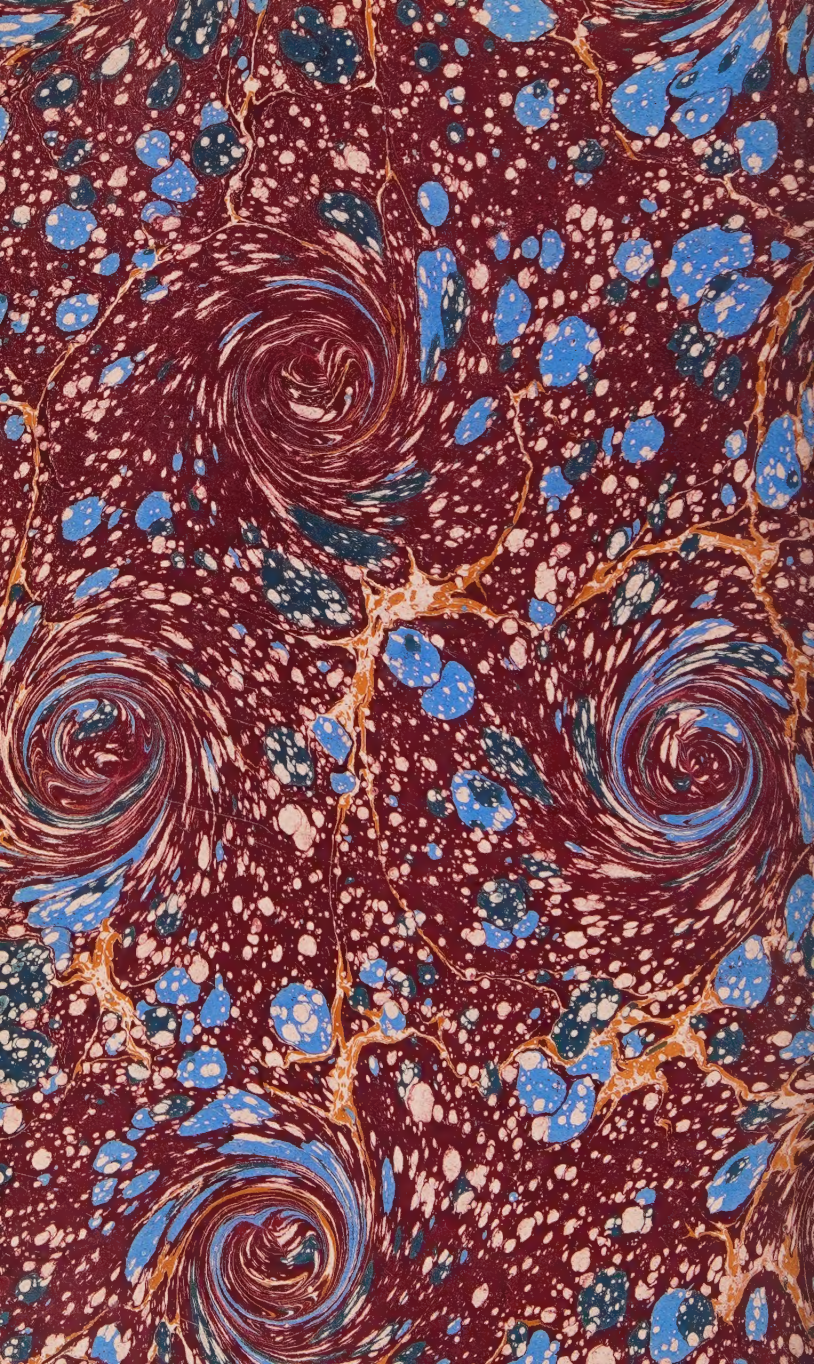

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